Turkish foreign and security policies in the post-Cold War era : success or failure? : 1989-1999

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TURKISH FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICIES IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA: SUCCESS OR FAILURE? 1989-1999

BY

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ABSTRACT

The end of the Cold War with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Block following the unexpected political developments in international politics since the late 1980s have had a profound impact on Turkey's international, regional and domestic environment. This thesis examines how the end of the bi-polar system of the Cold War impacted upon Turkey's foreign and security policies in the period of 1989-1999. In doing this, this study aims to explore the developments that took place in Turkey's geo-strategic area in the post-Cold War era; analyse and assess the impact of these developments on Turkey's overall interests and examine the policies that Turkey pursued in response to its changing security environment.

Turkey found that following the removal of the Soviet threat to Western Europe in the new era, its strategic importance due to its unique geographic location during the Cold War years substantially declined in the context of European security system, resulting in Turkey's realisation of its apparent marginalisation and cultural/political isolation from the newly-shaping European economic and political architecture. This set Turkey to seek a new foreign policy approach with the help of unexpected new opportunities which appeared as a result of the changing regional conditions of the new era, to define its new role, identify and interest.

The argument of this thesis is that although the new developments offered Ankara the opportunity to play a true regional power and pivotal state role in the Balkans, the Black Sea, the Middle East and particularly in the ex-Soviet territories of the Caucasia and Central Asia with its large Turkic/Muslim nationalities, contrary to initial expectations, the existence of diverse and closely-interlinked internal and external challenges coupled with its limited capabilities originating from the country's socio-economic and political inability prevented Turkey from fully exploiting the new foreign policy options and limited the possibility and the success of its multi-regional foreign policy outcome.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANAP	Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
AUSBFD	Ankara Universitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakultesi Dergisi (Journal of Ankara University Political Sciences Faculty)
ASAM	Avrasya Stratejik Arastirmalar Merkezi (Centre for Eurasian Strategic Research)
BBP	Buyuk Birlik Partisi (Great Union Party)
BSECP	Black Sea Economic Co-operation Project
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
CSBMs	Confidence and Security Building Measures
CSCC	Caspian Sea Co-operation Council
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
DECA	Defence and Economic Co-operation Agreement
DEP	Demokrasi Parti (Democracy Party)
DIE	Devlet Istatistik Enstitusu (State Statistical Institute)
DP	Demokrat Parti (Democrat Party)
DPT	Devlet Planlama Teskilati (The State Planning Organisation)
DSP	Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party)
DYP	Dogru Yol Partisi (Right Path Party)
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EC	European Community
ECO	Economic Co-operation Organisation
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Area
EP	European Parliament
EPC	European Political Co-operation
ESDI	European Security and Defence Identity
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
FP	Fazilet Partisi (Virtue Party)

FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
GAP	Guneydogu Anadolu Projesi (Southeast Anatolia Project)
GNP	Gross National Product
HADEP	Halkin Demokrasi Partisi (People's Democracy Party)
HEP	Halkin Emegi Partisi (People's Labour Party)
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IFOR	Implementation Force
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
IKV	Iktisadi Kalkinma Vaki (Economic Development Foundation)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IPP	Individual Partnership Programme
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
MEB	Milli Egitim Bakanligi (Ministry of National Education)
MEDO	Middle East Defence Organisation
MHP	Milliyetci Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Action Party)
MNP	Milli Nizam Partisi (National Order Party)
MSP	Milli Selamet Partisi (National Salvation Party)
NACC	North Atlantic Co-operation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIC	Newly Independent Countries
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Conference
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSCE	Organisation on Security and Co-operation in Europe
PASOK	Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PKK	Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PUK	Patriotic Union Kurdistan
RCD	Regional Cooperation for Development
RP	Refah Partisi (Welfare Party)
SAM	*Stratejik Arastirmalar Merkezi* (The Centre for Strategic Research)
SP	Saadet Partisi (Felicity Party)
SHP	Sosyal Demokrat Halkci Parti (Social Democratic Populist Party)

TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TICA	Turkish International Co-operation Agency
TL	Turkish Lira
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TTK	Turk Tarih Kurumu (Turkish Historical Society)
UN	United Nations
UNPRDEP	The UN Preventive Deployment Force
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organisation

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study

The main aim of this dissertation is to show that Turkey's post-Cold War foreign and security policies were less successful than originally expected by Turkish policy makers and the wider public in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War. As such, the study will explore the developments that took place in Turkey's geo-strategic area in the post-Cold War era; analyse and asses the impact of these developments on Turkey's overall interests and examine the policies that Turkey pursued in response to its changing security environment.

Theoretical framework: Could Turkey play a 'great power' role?

Contrary to its limited involvement in its region under the limitations of the bi-polar international system, the end of the Cold War enabled Turkey to have a direct involvement in more than a half-dozen geographical region. The new regional and international environment, which in many ways presented Turkey a unique opportunity to exert greater influence in the regions beyond its borders extending from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China, quickly led to expectations that Turkey was 'marching towards becoming a regional superpower'. By most standards Turkey could easily be identified as a middle power in the global context or, at the least, an important regional power. However, its aspiration to play a 'great power' role in the regions beyond its immediate borders was not viable from a theoretical perspective. Thus, although to some, Turkey had a real opportunity to become a 'great power' with the help of new foreign policy opportunities and emerging alternatives in the new era, the country lacked the requisite qualities to become such a power. As such, despite initial high hopes and expectations, Turkey's ambitious foreign policy to play a leadership role in its region became limited by its actual as opposed to presumed influence in the period understudy.

Power is a contested concept and there is a little agreement on how it should be defined as it is widespread and diverse. Krieger defines it as 'the ability to get what is

wanted, or to produce desired change', while Stern puts it as 'the capacity to produce intended effects'.[1] Power, therefore, -political, economic or military- is the prime requisite for being an influential actor in international relations. According to John Mearsheimer, 'power is the currency of great-power politics, and states compete for it among themselves. What money is to economics, power is to international relations.'[2] Essentially, the most powerful states in the system exert most of the influence on international events.[3]

The idea of ranking powers hierarchically from 'large' to 'small' has been a constant feature of descriptions of international relations for centuries. Power ranking can be determined by such measures as geographic size, size of population, size and nature of the economy, degree of international role and economic dependence, level of industrial and technological development, and the size and sophistication of military capabilities. Powers then may be defined according to their relative position on scales of these indicators, or certain combinations from them. Hence the hierarchical structure of modern world politics can be characterised as consisting of great powers, middle powers, small powers and micro-states. The idea of a hegemonic, or of 'superpowers' are often added at the top of the hierarchy.[4]

Although there is no clear and uncontested definition in politico-military or economic terms, 'middle powers' are those states, which are generally regarded as secondary only to the 'great powers' in terms of their influence on world affairs. Their level of power

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[1]Joel Krieger, *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World,* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 739-40; Geoffrey Stern, *The Structure of International Society,* Second Edition, (London and N. York: Pinter, 2000), p. 161. Also see, David Miller (ed.), *Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought,* (Oxford and New York: Blackwell, 1987), pp. 397-400; David A. Baldwin (ed.), 'Power and International Relations' in *Handbook of International Relations,* Walter Carlsneas, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons (eds.), (London: Sage Publications, 2002), pp. 176-91; Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought,* Second Edition, (London: McMillan, 1982), pp. 432-3.

[2]John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), p. 12.

[3]Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations,* Seventh Edition (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006), p. 77.

[4]Martin Griffiths, *Encyclopaedia of International Relations and Global Politics*, (New York and London:

permits them to play only decidedly limited and selected roles in subordinate systems other than their own.[5] They usually have large populations, are relatively developed, possess credible armed forces and are reasonably wealthy (measured as GNP per capita). They are also regional powers of some stature.[6] Given this framework, Turkey had the largest economy in its immediate region spanning from the Balkans to the Middle East with its strong army and growing dynamic large population as well as its considerable influence in some of the regional affairs, certainly qualifies it as a middle power. Although Holbraad did not include Turkey in the list of eighteen middle power states in his well-known study, *Middle Powers in International Politics,* by looking mainly at GNP, population and armed force levels of 1975, he nevertheless acknowledged that if Turkey had been classed under Asia, it would have easily qualified as a middle power under the limits proposed, but not in the European continent.[7] However, as will be discussed in the coming chapters in detail, Turkey made significant progress in political, economic and military fields particularly in the 1980s and its population has considerably increased since then. Thus, Goldstein and Pevehouse listed Turkey among the middle powers, and Mathison did not accept the idea that Turkey was a small state.[8]

Claiming the rank of a 'great power', on the other hand, is more demanding in terms of

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Routhledge, 2005), p. 535; Oyvind Osterud, 'Regional Great Powers' in *Regional Great Powers and International Politics,* Iver B. Neumann (ed.), (London and Hampshire: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 3-7.

[5]L. J. Cantori and S. L. Spigel, *The International Politics of Regions,* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 14.

[6]Middle powers are also subdivided 'upper middle powers' and 'lower middle powers' or 'secondary powers' or 'regional great powers', or when considered in relation to the superpowers, as 'other major powers' in state system. Although in many analysis the term 'superpower' is used to correspond to the classical European great powers of the nineteenth century, for the purpose of this study, 'upper middle powers' or other similar descriptions were used for the category of great powers. For an in-depth discussion see, Carsten Holbraad, *Middle Powers in International Politics,* (London and Basingstoke: The McMillan Press, 1984), pp. 75-91; Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations,* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 323; Osterud, *op.cit,* p. 3; Griffiths, *op.cit.,* p. 535.

[7]Holbraad, *Middle Powers,* op.cit., p. 89.

[8]Goldstein and Pevehouse, *op.cit.,* p. 79; Trygve Mathison, *The Function of Small States in the integration of Great Powers,* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1972); Also see, Ziya Onis, 'Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence', *MERIA,* vol. 5, no. 2, (June 2001)

political, economic and military capability, and behaviour.[9] Although what qualifies as a 'great power' is disputed in international relations literature, there are certain criteria that are generally acceptable by most analysts. To begin, such powers will usually posses advanced military capabilities and therefore have the ability to project power over vast distances in accordance with their national interests. For that reason, they can intervene in ongoing conflicts, be involved in military alliances, and participate in post-war settlements.[10] Great powers also tend to share a global outlook, or at least a large part of it, based on national interests far from their home territories and are usually characterised as possessing the political will to pursue them. Essentially, as they usually have appropriate levels of capability they can operate in more than one region.[11] Middle and minor powers, on the other hand, have primary interests only within a localised regional context.[12]

Each power has a sizeable population, relative at least to other states. They also have very strong economies. These large economies in turn rest on large populations, plentiful natural resources, advanced technology and educated labour forces.[13] They are among the

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[9]The term 'great power' can be traced back to the late nineteenth century, where five major European states (Austria, Britain, France, Prussia and Russia) informally gave themselves great powers status following the Congress of Vienna of 1815. It has been replaced with the term 'superpower' following the Second World War. They are clearly more than just regional powers, but do not meet all of the qualifications for superpower. It should also be noted that there is no clear delineation between a 'great' and 'regional' power. Some states may be regarded as both great and regional powers, i.e. China, Russia, Germany and Japan. There is a consensus among many analysts that during the Cold War years China, Germany, and Japan, with Britain and France had the great power rank. Russia could be added to this list in post-Cold War era. Evans and Newham, *op.cit.*, pp. 209-10; Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and powers: The Structure of International Security,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 36; David Robertson, *A Dictionary of Modern Politics*, Second Edition, (London: Europa Publications, 1993) , p. 453.

[10]This means, at the very least, possession of strategic nuclear capability with a command of large conventional military forces, backed by a huge population. Holbraad puts this 'having technological and economic potential sufficient for maintaining or increasing nuclear capability at a comparable level.' However, as in the case of Japan and Germany, to some extent, states could held a 'great power' status by virtue of their economic capacity and wealth. See, Carsten Holbraad, *Superpowers and International Conflict*, (London: McMillan Press, 1979), pp. 10-3; Holbraad, *Middle Powers*, op.cit., p. 78; Buzan and Waever, *op.cit.*, pp. 33-4.

[11]Buzan and Waever, *op.cit*, p. 35.

[12]Jack S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495-1975,* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1983); M Haas, *International Conflict,* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1974), p. 324 and p. 331; Evans and Newham, *op.cit.*, pp. 209-10.

[13]Goldstein and Pevehouse, *op.cit.*, p. 78.

richest states in international system and disproportionably involve in world trade while being the primary source of foreign direct investment.[14] Moreover, great powers are the leading actors in the establishment and maintenance of most of the international organisations and accordingly their status is formally recognised and institutionalised in treaties and international organisations i.e. the UN Security Council.[15]

As will be demonstrated in the coming chapters, Turkey's attempt to become a great regional power in the new regional and international environment did not and could not materialise. Being at the nexus of a half-dozen region in which each area has its own set of political system and issues, Turkey has a unique strategic location, and virtually no other state -except for the US- plays a part in so many different geographical regions. Accordingly, Turkey believed it should naturally play a more important part in all regions and therefore also had a justification for demanding a higher standing internationally in general. In view of this, Turkey's foreign policy interests appeared to be so ambitions that only a 'great power' could fulfil such a role.[16] However, how far Turkey was ready to meet the necessary criteria for the attainment of such a status was a different issue all together.

Although Turkey had a large population equal to that of some of the European states such as France, Britain and Germany, when Turkey's overall power capabilities relative to those of other great powers were considered it could not come close to those of other major powers. Yet although population is a tangible element of power, it does not *per se* make a nation more powerful, and it has aspects of intangibility such as unity, literacy

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[14]Japan, China, Russia, Great Britain and France account for about one-third of the world's total GDP. Griffiths, *op.cit.*, pp. 349-52.

[15]China, Russia, Great Britain and France have a great power influence on the UN as the permanent members of the Security Council.

[16]Barry Rubin, 'Turkey: A Transformed International Role' in *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multi-regional Power,* Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci (eds.), (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 1; Buzan and Waever, *op.cit.*, p. 394.

and loyalty.[17] Furthermore, a great power is expected to have the capability to make large scale economic, also cultural, investments (soft power) in other parts of the world in order to indirectly exert influence. Having serious structural economic problems and other domestic issues such as the years of costly struggle against separatist PKK terror, its foreign policy initiatives designed to strengthen the country's role as an influential regional power lacked the necessary economic resources and strength. Thus, most promises of aid and investment in Turkey's part, as far as its foreign economic relations were concerned, remained mostly just statements of intentions. Essentially, despite president Turgut Ozal's claim 'to feel as strong as Japan' in the new era, Turkey's aspiration for great powerhood without the necessary economic foundation was bound to fail.

Additionally, its military capacity that would enable it to project force beyond its locality could not come close to those of other great powers even though it had one of the strongest conventional forces in its region, the second largest standing force in NATO after the US. One other aspect of assuming a great power role is to be able to play a managerial role in international system in relation to the maintenance of order by means of diplomatic accommodations, linkage policies, codes of crisis management and so on.[18] As will be seen in the coming chapters, when Turkish involvement in regional affairs became inevitable as a result of both internal and external factors in the face of its rapidly changing immediate region, which could have well expanded Turkey's international standing, Ankara failed to develop coherent policies and was far from satisfying expectations.

The other aspect of being great powerhood is that apart from being formally recognised in treaties and international organisations as great powers, they are also

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[17]Theodore A. Couloumbis and James H. Wolfe, *Introduction to International Relations: Power and Justice,* Third Edition, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1986), pp. 95-6.

informally recognised as great powers by international society by means of their reputation or standing. Turkey, on the other hand, had been generally inward-looking, had taken a low profile role in international relations and became reluctant to operate beyond its borders and therefore consciously refrained from direct involvement in its own region during the entire Cold War period. Foreign adventures, spheres of influence, alliance systems and ambiguous international interests were all considered foolish, risky, and even suicidal.[19] Thus, the country had no aspiration whatsoever in rising in the hierarchy of international power, and as Hale has pointed out 'it almost seemed to have dropped out of world politics.'[20]

In answering the question of what factors make a nation powerful, many analysts refer to tangible (physical foundations like geography, population, natural resources, military strength, economics, etc.) as well as intangibles elements such as leadership and personality, societal cohesiveness, foreign support and dependency, bureaucratic-organisation efficiency.[21] Turkey certainly lacked some of these qualities that could have made a difference in driving the nation forward in the decade in question. Its domestic security challenges in the form of separatist PKK terror, the Kurdish issue, the advance of political Islam, and in many cases the lack of harmony between certain institutions of the country i.e. civil and military establishment meant that the element of national unity in pursuing a more comprehensive role in world politics was missing to a great extent at a time when it was so vital. In the end, although Turkey achieved some successes in its post-Cold War foreign and security policies, given its overall limited capacity, it was increasingly sidelined in the push for becoming a true regional power, denying it the power, role and status it sought in international politics and arena.

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[18]Osterud, *op.cit,* p. 6.
[19]Rubin, *op.cit.,* p. 1.
[20]Hale, 'Turkish Foreign Policy After the Cold War', *op.cit.* p. 231; Rubin, *op.cit,* p. 1.
[21]J. C. Johari, *International Relations and Politics: Theoretical perspective*, (Oriental University Press, 1986), pp. 194-219; Couloumbis and Wolfe, *op.cit,* pp. 95-103.

The end of the Cold War

The election of Mikhail Gorbachev as the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1985 was intended by the *Politburo* to establish a new leadership that would strengthen the USSR in its international relations and provide the stability and longevity it required. In essence the USSR attempted to introduce a new focus in its international relations with a view to strengthening its role in the world. However, the domestic reforms both political and economic, *Glasnost* (openness) followed by *Perestroika* (economic restructuring), introduced by Gorbachev in his attempt to halt the evident decline in the country's prosperity and thereby transform the USSR into a more efficient and viable politico-economic world power, would not bring much help to stop the erosion of the Soviet influence in Eastern Europe and worsening economic and political situation at home, and, in fact, served to undermine not only the unity of the Soviet Union but also the foundations of the Cold War itself.

Thus, the inauguration of the new style of Soviet politics ushered in by Gorbachev encouraged subsequent summit meetings with the US and resulted in significant cuts in strategic weapons. Such developments could only be seen as specially promising for a new *détente*.[22] Within only a few years though, revolution overtook the liberalisation of policy being conducted by Moscow —bringing with an era of change in the form of the

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[22]For a detailed discussion on the reasons of the shift in the Soviet policy, and events led to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the disintegration of the Soviet Union see, David S. Painter and Melvyn P. Leffler, 'The End of the Cold War' in *Origins of the Cold War*, Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter (eds.), (London: Routhledge, 1994), pp. 317-9; Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, 'Who Won the Cold War?', *Foreign Policy,* no. 94, (Spring 1994); Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, 'The International Source of Soviet Change', *International Security,* vol. 16, no. 3, (Winter 1991-1992), p. 80; Daniel Chirot, 'What Happened in Eastern Europe in 1989?', in *The Revolutions of 1989,* Vlademir Tismaneany (ed.), (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 31-2; Bertel Heurlin, 'The Role of The United States and the Soviet Union' in *European Security -towards 2000,* Michael C. Pugh (ed.), (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 21-2; Frederic Kagan, 'The Secret History of Perestroika, *The National Interest,* no. 23, (Spring 1991), p. 41; Caroline Kennedy, 'The Development of Soviet Strategies' in *Security and Strategy in the New Europe,* Colin McInnes (ed.), (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 169-72; J. P. D. Dunbabin, *The Cold War*, (New York: Longman, 1994), pp. 476-7; Fred Halliday, 'The Empires Strike Back? Russia, Iran and the New Republics', *The World Today*, vol. 51, no. 11, (November 1995), p. 220; Martha Brill Olcott, "Sovereignty and the 'Near Abroad'", *Orbis,* vol. 39, no. 3, (Summer 1995), p. 353; Lilia Shevtsova, 'The August Coup and the Soviet Collapse', *Survival,* vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 5-18; Eric Herring, 'The Collapse of the Soviet Union: The Implications for World Politics' in John Baylis and N. J. Rengger (eds.), *Dilemmas of World Politics,*

collapse of the Berlin Wall in late 1989, Soviet acceptance of German re-unification in 1990, dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991 and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Central and Eastern European countries, culminating with the collapse of the communist regimes.

In all, these developments brought about an end to the bi-polar system of the Cold War and, thereby the East-West confrontation, that had dominated international politics for over four decades. Eventually, evolutionary developments led to enormous changes in the map of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Black Sea, the Caucasus, and Central Asia following the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 and Yugoslavia later in 1992 as these nations sought to establish sovereign control over their own territories.

The meaning of the end of the Cold War for Turkey

Under the limitations of the Cold War bi-polar balance of power, Turkey's foreign relations were restricted and, in effect, Ankara was mainly occupied with a few basic foreign policy issues: the containment of the Soviet ideological/expansionist threat; tense relations with Greece including the Cyprus issue; integration with the West through the European Community, (later the European Union); and towards the end of the Cold War a growing separatist terror threat allegedly supported by its southern neighbours. As a staunch ally of the West, Turkey placed its entire defence requirements within NATO and generally took a secondary role in international politics. Essentially, therefore, throughout the Cold War period Turkey followed a staunchly Western-oriented foreign and security policy regardless of the political developments within the country and, with the noticeable exception of Cyprus, showed little interest in regions and events beyond its borders.

Compared to this relatively stable and predictable political environment, the collapse of the Cold War system, gave Turkey a direct involvement in at least seven regions:

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 354.

namely Europe, the Balkans, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Caucasus-Caspian basin, Central Asia and the Black Sea. With the disintegration of the USSR the former border lands with the Soviet Union to the east were replaced by the newly-independent Caucasian republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia while Turkey became a neighbour of Russia and the Ukraine by sea to the north. Further east, five independent Muslim/Turkic republics emerged in Central Asia. To the northwest, the overthrow of several Balkan communist regimes, and later the disintegration of Yugoslavia altered the Balkan state system and resulted in the emergence of new democratic regimes and independent states. To the south, the end of the Soviet political and military support as well as financial aid for some of its Middle Eastern neighbours has given Ankara flexibility in its regional involvement without the fear of Cold War friction. Taken together, this radically transformed international environment has led Ankara to become more engaged in its rapidly changing immediate region.

Having shared the longest border with the Soviet Union and having been responsible for fully defending one-third of the NATO Alliance's frontier with the Warsaw Pact, Turkey was the main bulwark against the Soviet threat in the Western European security structure during the Cold War. Essentially, its unique strategic location made Ankara an important member of the alliance. Thus, the other immediate impact of the end of the Cold War was that, with the removal of the global threat to the West following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey's strategic relevance was questioned. As Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem (1997-2002) explained,

> Turkey is not one of the major winners of the Cold War. On the contrary, it is a loser. Our strategic value during the Cold War was derived from our particularity of a rampart at the outskirts of Europe, blocking the way of the so-called 'evil force' ...once that role was over; the strategic relevance of Turkey was lost. This was a trauma for Turkey. We had got used to living in Cold War conditions. Our institutions, our mission, our self-esteem and our identity were all defined by the Cold War concepts and realities.[23]

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[23]Ismail Cem, *Turkey in the New Century,* Second edition, (Nicosia: Rustem , 2001), p. 133.

As Europe increasingly shifted its focus towards its own internal matters such as the restructuring of Europe, it began to view Turkey as a 'burden' rather than as an important 'asset'. Thus, in light of Europe's new agenda, Turkey, as a distant ally on the European periphery with its immense internal and external problems, did not constitute a priority. As such, as Europe started to attribute less importance to strategic issues in its relations with Turkey, while on issues of Turkey's European identity and Islamic past that had been long before ignored now came to the fore and resulted in Turkey's marginalisation and exclusion in the new European political and economic arrangements. This, however, forced Turkey to develop a new foreign policy approach or a new 'grand strategy' in its international relationships. As such, Turkish policy makers have increasingly turned towards other regions in their attempt to redefine the country's new role, identity and interests.

As early as 1990, the Turkish president Turgut Ozal stated that 'for years we claimed that Turkey is an important ally of NATO as a southern flank country. It is now true that Turkey's strategic importance has declined. They will not welcome us to the European club (the EU) easily as they did to Greece because of the religion factor.' Then in 1991, he pointed out other areas where Turkish foreign policy could expand, 'the newly-opened Central Asia region, where Turkey has considerable influence, the Balkans and our southern area, the Arab/Muslim world.'[24]

Sharing the same perception with Ozal, prime minister Suleyman Demirel claimed that Turkey could no longer play the same role it did during the Cold War years and outlined new foreign policy objectives for the country in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War as: 'an active, multifaceted, and balanced approach that seeks to exploit the new opportunities created by recent developments involving expanded relations with the

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[24]'Ozal'dan 6 Mesaj', *Cumhuriyet,* 17 July 1990; *Cumhurbaskani Turgut Ozal'in Dunyadaki Yeni Dengeler*

Balkan, Black Sea, Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, Caucasian and Central Asian Countries.' However, he also emphasised that the new policy outlook did not constitute an alternative to its efforts to join the EC, but rather complimented Turkey's desire to consolidate its ties to Europe.[25] This foreign policy outlook became even more apparent following the exclusion of Turkey from EU's biggest ever enlargement process in 1997.[26] In response, Turkish prime minister Mesut Yilmaz threatened to withdraw Turkey's membership application and declared that Turkey would freeze its political relations with the Union and would rather seek a 'strategic partnership' with the US and extend its relations with Israel. 'Turkey is not isolated in its region and still has friends in Washington, the Caucasus region, Central Asia and has a developing security relationship with Israel.' [27]

Consequently, this effort to overcome a new isolation and insecurity would be seen in Turkey's growing involvement in its immediate regions extending from the Balkans to Central Asia as well as in strong alignments established with the US and Israel in the Middle East context.[28] To begin with, the active policy in support for the US-led coalition during the Gulf War of 1991, at the cost of abandoning its long-term traditional Middle Eastern policy, could be viewed in a way as Ankara's efforts to prove itself as a continuing important asset for, and to, the West despite declining strategic importance.

Importantly, with the re-emergence of a 'Turkic world' of more than 60 million people

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ve Turkiye Konulu Pazar Toplantilarinda Yaptiklari Konusma', (Istanbul: ANAP, 17 November 1991)

[25]'Ozal Korkak, Akbulut Bilgisiz', *Cumhuriyet,* 5 August 1990; See Demirel's press conference in December 1991 in Peri Pamir, 'Turkey in its Regional Environment in the Post-bipolar Era: Opportunities and Constrains' in *Building Peace in the Middle East,* Elise Boulding (ed.), (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994), pp. 135-6.

[26]The EU agreed to open membership negotiations with 11 of its 12 applicants.

[27]Stephen Kinzer, 'Turkey, Rejected, will Freeze Ties to European Union', *New York Times,* 15 December 1997.

[28]It was suggested that with establishing economic and political entities among the newly-independent Turkic republics such as a 'commonwealth of Turkic republics' or a 'common market of the Turks' Turkey could not only respond to its exclusion from Europe but also become an independent 'regional superpower' by leaving European vocation. See, Oral Sander, 'Yeni Bir Bolgesel Guc Olarak Turkiye'nin Dis Politika Hedefleri' in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi,* Faruk Soylemezoglu (ed.), Second edition, (Istanbul: Der Yayinlari, 1998), p. 608.

in Central Asia, Caucasia and, to a certain extent, in the Balkans, Turkey had a new opportunity to help to overcome its cultural/political isolation. The newly-emerging countries, regimes and communities extending from the Balkans to the ex-Soviet territories were keen to establish close relations with Ankara due to the shared strong historical, cultural and religious ties. Moreover, in addition to the country's unique strategic location, Turkey appeared to have the strongest regional military power (with the exception of Russia) and the largest economy in the region extending from the Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Black Sea basin to the Middle East with its dynamic large population.

Thus, the new political and economic realities favourable to Turkey led politicians and the wider public to hope that the twenty-first century would be a 'Turkish century' or an 'era of the Turks'.[29] As one minister put it, 'it is the first time that a historical luck has favoured the Turkish side since the Vienna retreat of 1683'.[30] 'Turks living in an area extending from the Adriatic Sea to the borders of China have awakened and become active' Turkish prime minister Demirel declared, showing an interest in Turkish-speaking communities outside the borders of Turkey, for probably first time in the modern history of the country.[31] With its unique location, dynamic population, economic and military potential, Turkey had the potential of emerging as a true regional power and a pivotal state, or even a super regional power, thereby providing Ankara with a greater international role in world affairs as a 'world state' and a 'role model' for the newly-independent states of Central Asia and the Caucasus. It could even play a 'bridge' role between the West and these regions. In the words of Demirel, Turkey was now 'a gateway for the Western world to Caucasia, and Central Asia, the Middle East and the

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[29]These rhetoric were widely used by the Turkish president, the prime minister and other senior officials as well as the leaders of some of the Turkic republics such as Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. See, Hasan Celal Guzel, '21. Asir Turk Asri Olacaktir', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), pp. 118-26.

[30]Kamran Inan, *Dis Politika,* (Istanbul: Otuken Yayinlari, 1993), p. 71.

[31]*The Middle East,* no. 213, (July 1992), p. 5.

Balkans'.[32] Turkish president Ozal stated that 'Turkey is marching towards becoming a regional superpower. Thank God, the inferiority complex we have suffered before the Western world for 300 years has ended.'[33]

Many Turkish and other leading academics and analysts also shared these views to varying degrees at the time. For example, Ian Lesser argued that Ankara's geo-strategic 'reach' was no longer limited to the role it played during the Cold War as a distant outpost on the European periphery, but that it was now poised to play a leading role across a vast region, from Eastern Europe to western China.[34] According to Sander, the new political developments enabled Turkey to gain a new place in the geopolitical thinking of Europe.[35] In turn, as William Hale argued the end of the Cold War had seen Turkey's re-mergence as an important actor, after a long period in which it almost seemed to have dropped out of world politics.[36]

However, this euphoria was short-lived. The first and foremost reason for this was that whilst the end of the Cold War era presented Turkey with some very real opportunities it also brought with it serious security threats, risks and challenges (probably more so than ever before in its modern history), thereby demanding Turkey spend more time fending off perceived dangers rather than to benefiting from the new opportunities.[37] The Balkans,

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[32]*The Time,* 19 October 1992, p. 31.
[33]*Turkish Times,* 15 November 1991.
[34]Ian O. Lesser, 'Preface', *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, Graham E. Fuller (ed.), (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), p. xiii.
[35]Oral Sander, Degisen Dunya Dengelerinde Turkiye' in *Yeni Dunya Duzeni ve Turkiye*, Sabahattin Sen (ed.), (Baglam: Istanbul, 1992), p. 26 and p. 30.
[36]William Hale, 'Turkish Foreign Policy After the Cold War', *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, vol. 1, (1993), p. 231. For similar views see, E. Graham Fuller, 'Turkey's New Eastern Orientation' in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, Graham E. Fuller (ed.), (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), p. 97; Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*, (New York: Basic Books, 1997), p. 41; Faruk Sonmezoglu, 'Sunus' in *Yeni Dunya Duzeni ve Turkiye*, Sabahattin Sen (ed.), (Baglam: Istanbul, 1992), p. 20; Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), 'Introduction' in *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 2.
[37]For a general outlook of the post-Cold War international order -or better known the 'new world order' led by the US see, Adam Roberts, 'A New Age in International Relations?', *International Affairs*, vol. 67, no. 3, (1991), p. 509; James Kurth, 'Things to Come: The Shape of the New World Order', *The National Interest*, no. 24, (Summer 1991), pp. 3-4; G. John Ikenberry, 'The Myth of Post-Cold War Chaos',

the Middle East and the Caucasia regions have always been among the most volatile parts of the world. Prior to the end of the bi-polar system, the two superpowers were able to 'manage' these regions and in doing so most of the deep-rooted regional issues such as ethnic tensions, border disputes, irredentism, nationalism as well as other potentially explosive military, political, economic and societal issues were suppressed. But with the end of the Soviet Union, in the words of one former Turkish defence minister, 'geographic destiny placed Turkey in the virtual epicentre of a "Bermuda Triangle" of post-Cold War volatility and uncertainty, with the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East encircling us.'[38] In retrospect, Turkey had to deal with the Gulf War, the Bosnia and Kosovo wars; the Azeri-Armenian war; civil unrest in Georgia; war in Chechnya; ongoing tension with Greece including the Cyprus issue and Serbia in the Balkans; Iran and Syria in the Middle East; Armenia in Transcaucasia and the growing Russian influence in the 'near abroad' on top of externally-linked internal threats of Kurdish separatism and Islamic radicalism.

Its long history and special ties with the Balkan states and the old Soviet territories of the Caucasus, Black Sea and Central Asia also became an important factor in the new relationships. Thus, the new developments served to force Turkey to acknowledge that it had a moral and cultural responsibility to help its former subjects, whether Turkish or non-Turkish as a result of its Ottoman past and its multiethnic identity, and therefore

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Foreign Affairs, vol. 75, no. 3, (May-June 1996), pp. 79-91; Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History', *The National Interest*, (Summer 1993), pp. 1-13; James Schlesinger, 'New Instabilities New Priorities', *Foreign Policy*, no. 85, (Winter 1991-1992), pp. 7-24; Eisuke Sakakibara, 'The End of Progressivism', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 5, (September-October 1995), pp. 8-14; Wallace J Thies, 'Rethinking the New World Order', *Orbis*, vol. 38, no. 4, (Fall 1994), p. 621; Paul H. Nitze, 'America: An Honest Broker', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 69, no. 4, (Fall 1990), p. 11; J. E. Spence, 'Entering the Future Backwards: Some Reflections on the Current International Scene', *Review of International Studies*, (1994), p. 8; John Lewis Gaddis, 'Toward the Post-Cold War World', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 69, no. 4, (Fall 1990), p. 11; Harold Brown, *Thinking About National Security*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 4-7; Ronald D. Asmus, 'The Rise or Fall? -of Multilateralism: America's New Foreign Policy and What It Means for Europe' in *European Security and International Institutions After the Cold War*, Marco Carnovale (ed.), (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 153-76.

[38]H. Sami Turk, *Turkish Defence Policy*, speech delivered at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 3 March 1999.

necessitated more Turkish involvement in regional affairs. This was evident during the Bosnia and Kosovo wars; the Azeri-Armenian war and the Chechnya and Abkhazia conflicts. However, the emergence of the Turkic republics, Muslim communities and new ethno/religious politics in the Balkans and Caucasia took Turkish policy makers who were totally unprepared by surprise. Hence, when these nations turned to Turkey for political, economic and military help, which could have well expand Turkey's influence in the region, Ankara's support was too limited to satisfy expectations. Ankara was unable to establish clear and well-established foreign policies in the region and attempted to continue its traditional foreign policy behaviour which avoided forging relations or basing policies merely on common religious and cultural bonds. This traditional approach, however, caused some differences among the foreign and security policy-making elite in Ankara as well as the wider public as lobbies who challenged the 'traditionalists' and who pushed for more active policies emerged. Turkish foreign minister Cem summed up this initial response to change.

> With the end of the Cold War, Turkey's first reaction was one of shock. The proliferation of unknowns provoked anxiety. There were strong feelings of alienation and insecurity at both the individual and societal level. The country was caught unprepared for the emerging world and its new conditions. It was almost impossible for a country whose legal, political, and values systems were reflections of its long established role to acquire a function in this new world.[39]

Turkey was also restricted by the fact that its involvement, particularly in the Balkans, Caucasia and Central Asia, caused a certain amount of uneasiness among its traditional rivals, most notably Greece, Iran and Russia as they attempted to balance the growing Turkish influence. This was most evident regarding Russia and, to a lesser extent, Iran. Beginning in the mid-1990s Russia successfully attempted to limit the Turkish influence, in what it considered, its own 'backyard'.

In addition to these external challenges, the end of the Cold War brought about

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[39]Cem, *op.cit.*, pp. 34-5.

domestic upheaval and the rise of nationalistic and religious sentiments. In particular, the mounting separatist PKK terror which was exacerbated by the Gulf War of 1990-91, and the advance of political Islam that challenged the very foundations of the secular regime meant that Turkey had serious domestic security challenges it could no longer ignore. Fifteen years of the PKK terror was a huge drain of financial resources and created immense societal hostility. It also adversely affected Turkey's external relations (especially with Europe and Turkey's southern Middle Eastern neighbours).

In the face of this domestic instability, the army took increasingly on a high profile role in domestic politics, particularly in the second half of the 1990s, which placed it in conflict with the elected governments whom it viewed as lacking in commitment and ability to deal with the threats facing the country. This was most evidenced when the army attempted to restrict the non-traditional policies of the first ever Islamist government led by the Refah (Welfare) Party (RP) and pressured the government to resign bringing further question marks over its democratic tradition.

Thus, not surprisingly, developments in Turkish domestic politics in the decade in question was also instrumental in influencing its foreign policy and external relations. Between 1989 and 1999 there were eleven different governments (nine of which were coalitions). All had with contrasting foreign policy priorities and orientations. In the same period, thirteen different foreign ministers held office (11 between 1990 and 1997 to be precise, with one foreign minister holding the seat less than a month). As Sami Kohen, a leading columnist for the Turkish daily *Milliyet* on foreign affairs, wrote,

> The troubles that the ongoing political crisis of the country causes in foreign policy area are more strongly felt with each passing day. In the foreign relations area, we are going through the most problematic period in the history of the republic. The country fails to take rational and effective decisions to solve these problems because the political system is deadlocked. Bureaucrats try to solve the problems within the limits of their powers by introducing short-term, provisional

formulas. Ankara is no longer able to take the initiative and merely reacts.[40]

Turkey's ongoing social and economic problems such as high inflation, large public sector borrowing, high unemployment, a huge budget deficit, highly unfair income distribution, mounting external debt, and corruption also severely hampered the efforts to pursue an effective foreign policy. Throughout the 1990s, the inflation rate averaged 72 percent per year between 1990 and 1999 (the EU average was less than 3 percent).[41] Accordingly, in the face of severe structural problems in the economy Turkey lacked the capacity to provide large-scale investments and aid to exploit new economic opportunities in the newly emerging markets of Central Asia, the Black Sea, the Balkans and the Caucasia.

Thus, the end of the Cold War had a profound effect on Turkey's domestic, regional and international environment and forced Turkey to reassess its traditional foreign and security policies. This study will show, how sudden and unpredictable regional developments caught Turkey unprepared and how, in many cases, Turkey failed to formulate and implement the necessary policies to enable it to seize upon the new opportunities. As such, this study argues that despite the early high hopes and expectations among Turkish policy makers and the Turkish public that Turkey would emerge as a regional (super) power and a 'role model' in the Balkans, the Caucasia,

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[40]Sami Kohen, 'Guclu Hukumet Olmadikca', *Milliyet,* 19 June 1996.

[41]The combination of internal and external factors such as the Gulf War of 1991, severe financial crises of 1994, the collapse of the Russian economy during the latter half of the 1990s together with the economic turmoil in several Asian countries in 1997, and the devastating earthquake of 1999 had a profound effect upon the Turkish economy. GNP declined to as low as –6.1 percent in 1994 and 1999, while it was US$151 billion in 1990 amounted to only US$186 billion in 1999. The value of the Turkish Lira (TL) plunged from a value of about 2,606 to the US dollar in 1990 to 420,126 in 1999. Turkey's external and internal debt rose from US$61 billion in 1991 to US$167 billion in 1999 (US$103 billion being external debt, equivalent to 54 percent of its GNP). Moreover, due to economic and political instability Turkey could not attract enough foreign capital investment. Between 1993-1999, it was only US$5 billion while some of the East European countries for example Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary attracted well over US$60 billion (Poland alone attracted US$30 billion) worth of investment in the same period. *DPT Temel Ekonomik Gostergeler*, (January 2001), p. 13; Turkiye Istatistik Yilligi 1997, (Ankara: T.C. Basbakanlik DIE, 1998), pp. 640-1; Turkiye Istatistik Yilligi 1999, (Ankara: T.C. Basbakanlik DIE, 2000), pp. 626-7; Hazine Istatistikleri 1980-1999, (Ankara: T.C. Basbakanlik HDTM, 2000), p. 37, p. 68 and p. 71; http://www.treasury.gov.tr/english/ybs/geneling.htm; Henry and Ebru Ertugal-Loewendahl, *Turkey's Performance in Attracting Foreign Direct Investment*, CEPS Working Document No. 157,

Central Asia and the Middle East, a combination of internal and external realities reduced this possibility. Instead, by 1999, Ankara could only claim (bilateral) ties with Turkic republics of the former Soviet Union and the strong 'strategic partnerships' with the US and Israel, while it had been marginalized in the European economic and political context, isolated in the Arab Middle East and had tense relations with almost all its immediate neighbours: Greece, Cyprus, Russia, Armenia, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Essentially therefore, as Mehmet Ali Birand, a senior foreign policy analyst for the Turkish daily *Sabah*, wrote in 1997;

> We have no neighbours left with whom we maintain good relations. Last week we received a thrashing in Tehran from the Islamic countries. Tension with Iran is still continuing. We are drifting towards a war with Iraq. We are almost about to go to war with Syria. Russia is very worried and resentful. The state of Turco-Armenian relations are common knowledge. No need to mention Greece and Cyprus. To this list we have not added the European Union.[42]

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to explore Turkey's foreign and security policies in the initial decade (1989-1999) of the post-Soviet era. In order to be able to examine the impact of the major developments in international politics on Turkey's foreign and security policies, the study aims to analyse those developments in detail to the extent that they are relevant to the subject of this dissertation so as to avoid extending the scope of the study.

This study is not a chronological history of Turkish foreign and security policy and thus does not claim to look at all developments that took place in the period covered by this work. For this reason, certain developments, which are not directly relevant to the subject of this thesis, are not discussed in detail. For example, although the Cyprus issue has been one of the cornerstones of Turkish foreign policy for most of the last fifty years, the inter-communal talks between the two communities of the divided island towards finding a lasting solution are not discussed in significant detail. The issue as a whole and end result rather than the details of ongoing negotiations process, which has been going

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(November 2000).

on over a quarter of a century, is important for the purpose of this study. Similarly, rather than exploring all aspects of, for example, Turkish-Syrian bilateral relationship only certain issues that are relevant to the study are dealt with.

Literature and sources of the study

Foreign policy and foreign relations have received relatively scant attention in the general literature on modern Turkey.[43] It is a fact that the most powerful states in the system exert most of the influence on international events and therefore get the most attention from international relations scholars.[44] Being a middle power in terms of its influence on world affairs, Turkey is not yet viewed as a central focus for research by international relations analysts.[45] Scholarly research on Turkish security policies are less available as only a few governmental departments monopolise the implementation and decision-making process.[46] Even so, many valuable studies exist on general Turkish foreign policy and some aspects of the security policies in both English and Turkish.[47] It

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[42]Mehmet Ali Birand, 'AB', *Sabah*, 18 December 1997.

[43]Erik J. Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* (London: L. B. Hauris, 1995), p. 342; Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000,* op.cit., p. 1.

[44]Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations,*7th Edition (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006), p. 79.

[45]Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the end of the Cold War,* (London: C. Hurst&Co, 2003), p. 3.

[46]Huseyin Bagci, *Guvenlik Molitikalari ve Risk Analizi Cercevesinde Balkanlar 1991-1993,* (Ankara: Dis Politika Enstitusu, 1904), p. 2-3.

[47]Mehmet Gonlubol (ed.), *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi 1919-1995,* Ninth edition, (Ankara: Siyasal Yayinlari, 1996); Oral Sander, *Turkiye'nin Dis Politikasi,* (Ankara: Imge, 1998); Faruk Soylemezoglu (ed.), *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi,* Second edition, (Istanbul: Der Yayinlari, 1998); Esat Cam, (ed.), *Turk Dis Politikasinda Sorunlar,* (Istanbul: Der Yayinlari, 1989); Mustafa Aydin (ed.), *Turkey at the Threshold of the 21st Century: Global Encounters and/vs. Regional Alternatives,* (Ankara: International Relations Foundation, 1998); Kemal Karpat (ed.), *Turkey's Foreign Policy in Transition 1950-1974,* (Lekden: Brill, 1975); Faruk Sonmezoglu (ed.), *Degisen Dunya ve Turkiye,* (Istanbul: Baglam Yayinlari, 1991); Claire Spencer, *Turkey between Europe and Asia,* (W. Sussex: Wilton Park, 1993); Ismail Cem, *Turkey in the New Century,* Second Edition, (Nicosia: Rustem Publishing, 2001); Kemal Karpat (ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy: Recent Developments,* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin, 1996); Fahir Armaoglu, *Turk Dis Politikasi,* (Ankara: TIY, 1994); Sabahattin Sen (ed.), *Yeni Dunya Duzeni ve Turkiye,* (Baglam: Istanbul, 1992); Gulnur Aybet, *Turkey's Foreign Policy and its Implications for the West,* (London: RUSI, 1994); Duygu B. Sezer, *Turkey's Security Policies,* Adelphi Papers, (1981); Graham Fuller (ed.), *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China,* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993); Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey,* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Sylvia Kedourie (ed.), *Turkey Before and After Ataturk: Internal and External Affairs,* (London: Frank Cass, 1999); Nicole and Hugh Pope, *Turkey Unveiled: From Ataturk and After,* (London: John Murray, 1997); Paul B. Henze, *Turkey and Ataturk's Legacy,* (Haarlem: SOTA, 1998); Erol Manisali (ed.), *Balkanlar, Kafkasya ve Ortadogu'da Gelismeler ve Turkiye,* (Istanbul: Kibris Arastirmalari Vakfi, 1994); Stephen J. Blank, Stephen C. Pelletiere and William T. Johnsen, *Turkey's Strategic Position at*

is also worth noting that there is some literature which exclusively deals with certain regions or regional issues such as the Balkans[48], the Turkic world[49], European Union and the US[50], and the Middle East[51].

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the Crossroads of World Affairs, (PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1993); Debbie Lovatt (ed.), *Turkey since 1970: Politics, Economics and Society,* (Hampshire and N. York: Palgrave, 2001); Morton Abramowitz (ed.), *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy,* (N. York: The Century Foundation Press, 2000); Roderic H. Davison, *Turkey: A Short History,* Third edition, (Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, 1998); Simon V. Mayall, *Turkey: Thwarted Ambition,* (Washington: National Defence University, 1997); C. Balim, E. Kalaycioglu, C. Karatas, G. Winrow (eds.), *Turkey: Political, Social and Economic Challenges in the 1990s,* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995); Erik Cornell, *Turkey in the 21st Century: Opportunities, Challenges, Threats,* (Richmond: Curzon, 2001); David Shankland (ed.), *The Turkish Republic at 75 Years,* (Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, 1999); James Pettifer, *The Turkish Labyrinth: Ataturk and the New Islam,* (London: Viking, 1997); William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000,* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2000); C. H. Dodd (ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Cambridge: Eatlon Press, 1992); Ahmet Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Turkiye'nin Uluslararasi Konumu,* (Istanbul: Kure, 2001); F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser (eds), *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty,* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2003); Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States,* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2000); Yasemin Celik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Westport: Praeger, 1999); Idris Bal (ed.), *21. Yuzyilin Esiginde Turk Dis Politikasi,* (Istanbul: Alfa, 2001); Baskin Oran (ed.), *Turk Dis Politikasi,* vol. 2, (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2002); Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci (eds), *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multi-regional Power,* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001); Idris Bal, *Turkish Foreign Policy in the post-Cold War Era,* (Boca Raton: Brownwalker Press, 2004); *Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics,* Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin (eds.), (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); Meliha Benli Altunisik and Ozlem Tur, *Turkey: Challanges of Continuity and Change,* (New York and Abingdon: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005);

[48]Tozun Bahceli, *Greek-Turkish Relations since 1955,* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1990); Dimitri Constas (ed.), *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External Factors,* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1991); Sukru, S. Gurel, *Tarihsel Boyut Icinde Turk Yunan Iliskileri 1821-1993,* (Ankara: Umit, 1993); Fotios Moustakis, *The Greek-Turkish Relationship and NATO,* (London: Frank Cass, 2003); D. Volkan Vamik and Norman Itzkowitz, *Turks and Greeks: Neighbours in Conflict,* (Huntingdon: The Eotlan Press, 1994); *Balkanlar,* Ismail Soysal (ed.), (Istanbul: OBIV, 1993); Semih Vaner (ed.), *Turk Yunan Uyusmazligi,* (Istanbul: Metis, 1990); Gunay G. Ozdogan and Kemali Saybasili (eds.), *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order,* (Istanbul: Eren, 1995); Mustafa Aydin and Kostas Ifantis (eds.), *Turkish-Greek Relations: The Securtiy Dilemma in the Aegean,* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004); *Greek-Turkish Relations in the Era of Globalisation,* Dimitris Keridis and Dimitrios Triantaphyllou (eds.), (Brassey's: Dulles, 2001); Clement Dodd, *Disaccord on Cyprus: the UN Plan and After,* (Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, 2003).

[49]A. Ahat Andican, *Degisim Surecinde Turk Dunyasi,* (Istanbul: Emre, 1996); Idris Bal, *Turkey's Relations with West and the Turkic Republics: The Rise and Fall of the 'Turkish Model',* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); B. Zakir Avsar and Ferruh Solak, *Turkiye ve Turk Cumhuriyetleri,* (Ankara: Vadi, 1994); Bulent Aras, *The New Geopolitics of Eurasia and Turkey's Position,* (London: Frank Cass, 2002); Gareth M. Winrow, *Turkey in Post-Soviet Central Asia,* (London: RIIA, 1995); *Gecis Surecinde Orta Asya Turk Cumhuriyetleri,* M. Kemal Oke (ed.), (Istanbul: Alfa, 1998); Bulent Gokay and Richard Langhorne, *Turkey and the New States of the Caucasus and Central Asia,* (Norwich and London: Wilton Park Paper, 1996); *Bagimsizligin Ilk Yillari: Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Kirgizistan, Ozbekistan ve Turkmenistan* (Ankara: Kultur Bakanligi, 1994).

[50]C. Balkir and A. Williams (eds.), *Turkey and Europe,* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993); M. Ali Birand *Turkiye'nin Gumruk Birligi Macerasi,* 1959-1996, (Istanbul: AD Yayincilik, 1996); David Bachard, *Turkey and the European Union,* (London: CER, 1998); Mehmet Ugur, *The European Union and Turkey: An Anchor/Credibility Dilemma,* (Hants: Ashgate Publishing, 1999); Nursin A. Guney and Esra Cayhan *Avrupa'da Yeni Guvenlik Arayislari NATO-AB-Turkiye,* (Istanbul: AFA, 1996); Metin Aydogan, *Avrupa Birligi'nin Neresindeyiz? Tanzimattan Gumruk Birligine,* (Istanbul: Kum Saati Yayinlari, 2002); Meltem Muftuler-Bac, *Turkey's Relations With A Changing Europe,* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997); Metin Heper, (ed.), *Turkey and the West,* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1994); Esra Cayhan, *Dunden Bugune Turkiye- Avrupa Birligi Iliskileri ve Siyasal Partilerin*

The existing literature on Balkans, Caucasia, Central Asia is also scarce. Nevertheless, the emergence of new independent countries following the end of the Cold War, has aroused a new interest in foreign policy issues in Turkish society with its large Balkan and Caucasian origin communities. The establishment of the *Turkiye Isbirligi ve Kalkinma Ajansi* (TIKA), (Turkish International Co-operation Agency) in 1992, which was attached to the foreign ministry to focus on mainly the Eurasian region, is an example of this. It should be remembered that Turkey's application for entry to the EU had served to create many centres and departments attached to the ministries and universities in major cities and also encouraged the creation of other non-official establishments such as *Iktisadi Kalkinma Vakfi* (IKV) (Economic Development Foundation).

Official documents and publications of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs were widely used throughout the study. *Newspot,* the press bulletin, was also a valuable source as were publications of some other state departments, such as *Devlet Istatistik Enstitusu* (State Statistical Institute), *Turkiye Cumhuriyeti Merkez Bankasi* (The Central Bank of the

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Konuya Bakisi, (Istanbul: Boyut, 1997); F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Troubled Partnership: Turkey and Europe,* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1998); Bulent Gokay (ed.), *Turkiye Avrupa'nin Neresinde?,* (Ankara: Ayrac, 1997); Vojtech Mastny and R. Craig Nation (eds.), *Turkey Between East and the West: New Challenges for a Rising Regional Power,* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996); Harun Arikan, *Turkey and the European Union: an Awkward Candidate for EU Membership,* (Harts: Ashgate, 2003); Nasuh Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance,* (New York: Nova Science Publisher, 2003); Mustafa Aydin and Cagri Erhan (eds.), *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present and Future,* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).

[51]Haluk Ulman (ed.), Ortadogu *Sorunlari ve Turkiye,* (Istanbul: TUSES, 1991); Henri J. Barkey (ed.), *Reluctant Neighbour: Turkey's Role in the Middle East,* (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 1996); Bulent Aras, Aras, Bulent, *Filistin-Israil Baris Sureci ve Turkiye,* (Istanbul: Baglam, 1997); Alon Liel, *Turkey in the Middle East: Oil, Islam and Politics,* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001); Robert Olson, (ed.), *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East,* (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Baskin Oran, *Kalkik Horoz: Cekic Guc ve Kurt Devleti,* (Istanbul: Bilgi, 1996); Mustafa Aydin, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Gulf War of 1990-1991,* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1998); Nihat Ali Ozcan, *PKK: Tarihi, Ideolojisi ve Yontemi,* (Ankara: ASAM, 1999); Philip Robins, *Turkish-Israeli Relations: From the Periphery to the Center,* (Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2001); Michael M Gunter, *The Kurds in Turkey: A Political Dilemma,* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990); Kemal Kirisci and Gareth M., *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict,* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1997); Philip Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East,* (London: Pinter for RUSI , 1991); Tayyar Ari, *Basra Korfezi ve Ortadogu'da Guc Dengesi, 1978-1996,* Third edition, (Istanbul: Alfa, 1998); Huseyin Aykol, *Ortadogu Denkleminde Israil-Turkiye Iliskileri,* (Ankara: Oteki, 1998); Sabahattin Sen (ed.), *Su Sorunu, Turkiye ve Ortadogu,* (Istanbul: Baglam, 1993); Marvine Howe, *Turkey: a Nation Divided Islam's Revival,* (Oxford: Westview Press, 2000); Efraim Inbar, *The Israeli-Turkish Entente,* (London: King's College London Mediterranean Studies, 2001); Ofra Bengio, *Turkish-Israeli Relationship: Changing Ties of Middle Eastern Outsiders,* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2004).

Republic of Turkey), *Devlet Planlama Teskilati* (The State Planning Organisation) and *Dis Ticaret Mustesarligi* (Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade). As of additional value use were the publications and two journals, *Foreign Policy* and *Dis Politika Dergisi*, of the Foreign Policy Institute; *Silahli Kuvvetler Dergisi* of the Turkish Armed Forces; SAM's quarterly journal *Perceptions*; ASAM's publications and quarterly *Avrasya Dosyasi;* Strateji Group's quarterly journal *Strateji,* and finally Ankara University Faculty of Political Science's two journals, *Ankara Universitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakultesi Dergisi* and *Milletlerarasi Munasebetler Turk Yilligi.*

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used during this research for Turkish and English media with their on-line editions, magazines, periodicals, books and other materials.

Structure of the study

This study comprises of nine chapters based on the regions neighbouring Turkey: Western Europe, the Middle East, the Balkans, Caucasia and Central Asia. The first chapter gives a brief historical background of Turkish foreign and security policies. More specifically, it establishes a background for Turkey's policies vis-à-vis each region. Chapter two and three examine Turkey's diminishing role with the removal of the Soviet threat to Western Europe and its resultant marginalisation within the European economic and political structure.

Chapter four and five analyse the developments in the Middle East region as one of the main sources of threat in the post-Cold War era and its resulting impact on Turkey's security interests. The Gulf War of 1991; water; the Kurdish issue; the rise of political Islam; the arms race; and the Middle East peace process are all discussed in detail. In this context, the Turkish-Israeli 'strategic partnership' appeared to be a practical option to balance these security concerns as the threat shifted from north to south, from the Soviet Union to Iraq, Iran and Syria.

Chapter six and seven examine Turkish policies vis-à-vis the developments taking place in the Balkans, in particular, the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Turkish-Greek relations are also discussed in these chapters as the changes in the region served to open new areas of rivalry and confrontation on top of the age-old Cyprus and Aegean-related issues. The two final chapters examine the developments in the old Soviet territories particularly Russia itself, the Caucasia-Caspian region, and Central Asia, all places that offer new opportunities as well as challenges to Turkey's overall interests.

PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

TURKISH FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICIES IN THE COLD WAR ERA

This chapter establishes a background for analysing Turkey's policies towards such regions as the Middle East, the Balkans, the old Soviet empire, Western Europe and the United States during the Cold War era.

During the formative years of the Turkish Republic, the 1920s and 1930s, Turkey's main security goal was to preserve territorial integrity and consolidate its independence. Thus, it sought friendly relations with neighbouring countries including the Soviet Union and avoided deep involvement in European affairs. Its neutrality-based foreign policy continued during the Second World War. However, Soviet demands for border revisions and changes in the Straits agreements in the post-War period coupled with an increasing communist ideological threat pushed Turkey towards security arrangements with the West, namely with the United States, with Turkey basing its entire security system on the NATO alliance since the early 1950s. However, the isolation this caused in its region influenced Ankara to seek a more balanced and 'multi-dimensional' relationship with its neighbours as well as Third World countries from the 1960s. Additionally, its economy-oriented foreign policies introduced in the early 1980s made these relationships even more visible and essential.

1.1. Evolution of Turkey's foreign and security policies between the two world wars

The end of the First World War also marked the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, which had allied itself with Germany against the Allied Powers. Following the Turkish War of Independence against the Great Powers and Greece (1920-22), Turkey signed the Lausanne Treaty[1] in 1922. This enabled it to stand as an independent state among the

[1]For the Treaty see, Ismail Soysal, *Turkiye'nin Siyasal Antlasmalari, 1921-1945),* vol. 1, (Ankara: TTK, 1983), pp. 67-241.

nations of the world and granted international recognition to its new borders.[2] Later in 1923, the Turkish Republic under the leadership of Kemal Ataturk was declared on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire.

Ataturk sought to establish an independent and secular nation-state that would place the country among the most civilised nations of the world. Thus, during his rule a variety of reforms in almost every aspect of life were introduced which aimed at secularising and modernising society.[3] *Kemalism* was developed as the official ideology of the Republic.[4] For Ataturk, Turkey's foreign policy objectives were to seek recognition as a sovereign entity; to preserve the borders drawn with *the Misak-i Milli*, the National Pact of 1920; to enjoy the full benefits of peace; and finally to look to the West for direction.[5] The famous motto of Ataturk 'peace at home; peace abroad' became a guiding principle in Turkey's external relations, and, even today, this plays an important role at the core of Turkey's general foreign policy.[6]

Another main feature of *Kemalist ideology* was that it strictly distanced itself from a revival of pan-Turkist, pan-Turan or pan-Islamic expansionism in other Turkic/Muslim communities particularly in Soviet Central Asia, Caucasia and the Balkans, a move justified by Ataturk on the grounds that 'there is no evidence in history that the policies of pan-Islamism and pan-Turanism have been practised and succeeded.'[7] The process of

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[2]For a detailed discussion on Turkish foreign policy during the War of Independence see, Toktamis Ates, 'Ulusal Kurtulus Savasinda Turk Dis Politikasi' in *Turk Dis Politikasinda Sorunlar,* (Istanbul: Der, 1989), pp. 1-24.

[3]The reforms included the abolition of the Caliphate and the Sultanate; the adoption of the Latin alphabet replacing the Arabic alphabet; the introduction of Western-style dress, law codes and Gregorian calendar; the closure of religious courts; the pursuance of women's rights. For the reforms see, Mustafa Baydar, *Ataturk ve Devrimlerimiz,* (Istanbul: Turkiye Is Bankasi, 1973)

[4]Kemalism defined itself by six principles: nationalism, secularism, republicanism, popularism, statism and revolutionism.

[5]*Ataturk'un Soylev ve Demecleri,* vol. 3, (Ankara: 1954), pp. 67-8; Ayla Gol, 'A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939', *AUSBFD*, vol. 48, no. 1-4, (1993), p. 57; Mehmet Gonlubol and Cem Sar, *Ataturk ve Turkiye'nin Dis Politikasi 1919-1938,* (Ankara: MEB, 1973).

[6]Ismet Giritli, *Kemalist Ideoloji: Siyasi ve Ekonomik Yonleri,* (Ankara: Yasar Egitim ve Kultur Vakfi, 1981), p. 19; Abdulahat Aksin, *Ataturk'un Dis Politika Ilkeleri ve Diplomasi,* (Istanbul: Inkilap ve Aka, 1966), pp. 1-5; *Ataturk'un Milli Dis Politikasi,* vol. 1, (Ankara: Kultur Bakanligi, 1981), p. 27.

[7]*Ataturk'un Soylev ve Demecleri,* (Ankara: Turk Devrim Tarihi Enstitusu), p. 436.

Westernization also meant that Ankara kept its ties with the Middle East at a minimum level and strictly refrained from involvement in regional affairs. Consequently, having distanced itself from the Ottoman legacy, apart from alignments established out of security considerations, under the subsequent Kemalist governments Turkey never showed any interest in its own region and refused to base its foreign policies on shared religious and cultural values.[8]

During the 1923-1930 period, the main security issue in terms of preserving territorial integrity and independence was the potential threat from the West resulting from unsettled aspects of the Treaty of Lausanne. The immediate impact of this perception was to seek new friendships as a balance to the West. Thus, despite the fundamental differences in terms of system and state philosophy, Turkey sought to have good relations with the new Soviet Union.[9] Though Turkey accepted technical and economic assistance from the Soviet Union, over the years, Turkey improved its relations with the Western world due to both its Westernisation policy and a growing fear of communist threat.[10]

Additionally, in order to preserve peace in the region and to consolidate its position as a sovereign entity, Turkey sought to set up new alliances and conclude treaties with other states. As such, it signed a Pact of Non-Aggression and Security with the Soviet Union in 1925, and concluded treaties with all the Balkan states: with Yugoslavia in 1925 and 1933; Romania in 1933; Bulgaria in 1929; and with Greece, the Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation and Arbitration in 1930. Furthermore, it also concluded several agreements with the great powers: the British-Turkish Treaty in 1926; the Treaty of Friendship and

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[8]Sedat Laciner, *From Kemalism to Ozalism: The Ideological Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy,* Unpublished PhD thesis, (King's College London, 2001), p. 283.

[9]The Soviet Union was also seeking international recognition for its existing borders and signed the first treaty with the Ankara government even before the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1921 in which it accepted the north-eastern borders of Turkey. For the bilateral relationship during the Turkish War of Independence see, Haluk F. Gursel, *Tarih Boyunca Turk-Rus Iliskileri,* (Istanbul: Ak, 1968), pp. 179-201.

[10]A. Haluk Ulman, 'Turk Dis Politikasina Yon Veren Etkenler I (1923-1968)', *AUSBFD*, vol. 23, no. 3, (September 1968), p. 241.

Good Neighbourliness with France in 1926 and the Turkish-Italian Treaty of Friendship, Conciliation and Neutrality in 1928. By joining the League of Nations in 1932 Turkey further consolidated its independence.

In addition, Ankara also looked for new alliances in the Middle East. Thus, the creation of the Saadabat Pact (sometimes referred to as the Eastern Entente or the Middle East Entente), between Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan in 1937, though a non-aggression pact not a defence treaty, was to serve in establishing peace and security in the Middle East. The Pact, in fact, was the first manifestation of Turkey's role as a bridge-maker between the West and the East after the Balkan Pact and provided greater security to its eastern flank.[11]

However, on certain issues concerning the Western powers, which had not been solved with the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey pursued assertive policies without making any compromise, i.e. the preservation of the borders drawn with *the Misak-i Milli*.[12] For example, the province of Hatay (where over forty percent of the population were Turkish) had been included in the National Pact frontiers but was retained under French trusteeship according to the Ankara Agreement of 1921. Ankara did not accept the situation as a *fait accompli* and followed active policies until the province became part of Turkey in 1938.[13] Likewise, Turkey attempted to gain full sovereignty over the Straits with the Montreux Convention of 1936. According to the Convention, it had the right to remilitarise the zone and control the special commission working under the auspices of the Assembly of the League of Nations created by the Lausanne Treaty.[14] However, despite these successful foreign policy endeavours, the issue of the oil-rich Mosul province, included in the *Misak-i Milli,* remained an exception. The League of Nations decided in favour of the British

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[11]Ismail Soysal, '1937 Saadabad Pact', *Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations*, (1988), pp. 151-3.

[12]Jacop Landau, 'Ataturk'un Buyuk Nutkunda Dis Politika' in *Ataturk'un Buyuk Soylevinin 50. Yil Semineri,* (Ankara: TTK, 1980), p. 45.

[13]Irfan and Margarete Orga, *Ataturk,* (London: Michael Joseph, 1962), p. 293.

government, which claimed the inclusion of Mousul as part of Iraq in 1925. Turkey could not resist this decision, as it was not a member of the League, which was largely dominated by Britain, and had to struggle to cope with a Kurdish uprising, most likely backed by Britain.[15]

The early 1930s saw the emergence of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy which eventually led to World War II. The new regimes seemed to be aspiring to redraw the European map, and the pressures they put on the Balkan countries to gain more control brought Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Romania together to discourage such a threat. These states signed an agreement creating the Balkan Entente in 1934, guaranteeing all frontiers and pledging collective security for the Balkans. However, as Bulgaria and Albania refused to join the alliance it was difficult to create a genuine regional organisation to deter Italy and Germany from pursuing their ambitions to penetrate and control the Balkans.[16]

1.2. Turkey and the Second World War: Neutrality pays

The radical foreign policy changes in these countries following the rise to power of Hitler and Mussolini meant that the main threat to Turkey's peace and independence was now not coming from Britain or France but from Italy and Germany.[17] This threat was evidenced by Italian ambition in the Mediterranean and Germany in the Balkans, and by the German occupation of Austria in 1938. As the Turkish foreign minister explained 'if Austria falls, this means the Germans are at our neck.'[18] This was compounded by the

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[14]Ferenc A. Vali, *The Turkish Straits and NATO*, (California: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), pp. 43-45.

[15]See, Kemal Melek, 'Turk-Ingiliz Iliskileri (1890-1926) ve Musul Petrolleri' in *Turk Dis Politikasinda Sorunlar*, (Istanbul: Der, 1989), pp. 70-3.

[16]Tozun Bahceli, *Greek-Turkish Relations since 1955*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), p. 14.

[17]John Parker and Charles Smith, *Modern Turkey*, (London: Routledge, 1940), pp. 194-5; Donald E. Webster, *The Turkey of Ataturk*, (Philadelphia: The American Academy of Political Science, 1939), p. 117.

[18]Quoted in Kamuran Gurun, *Savasan Dunya ve Turkiye*, (Istanbul: Inkilap, 1997), p. 675.

occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939, and subsequent economic pressure exerted on Romania, not to mention the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939.[19]

This imminent threat pushed Ankara to pursue closer relations with Britain and France as it was not ready to sustain a war in view of its both economic and military incapacity.[20] A Mutual Assistance Treaty was signed between the three states in October 1939, whereby Turkey received assurances from both Britain and France who would assist her in case of an attack by a European power, while Turkey in turn agreed to assist Britain and France if a war broke out in the Mediterranean area. In addition, Turkey was not be obliged to take action in case of a war with the Soviet Union.[21] Although, the war later spread to the Mediterranean, Turkey did not join the war arguing that this could have dragged it into a conflict with the Soviet Union. In the end, Ankara's well-calculated diplomatic manoeuvres to stay out of the war were successful.[22]

Furthermore, Turkey signed a Treaty of Territorial Integrity and Friendship with Germany in 1941, which helped Turkish policy-makers to utilise the balance of power without the need to abandon neutrality. With this Treaty, the two countries undertook to respect each other's territorial inviolability and integrity and abstain from any kind of direct or indirect action against each other.[23] At the Yalta Conference of 1945, Turkey was invited to attend the San Francisco Conference, which led to the establishment of the United Nations (UN), provided that Ankara declared war on either Germany or Japan. Turkey broke off its relations with Germany and then declared war on the Axis in 1945.

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[19]For the relations with Germany in this period see, *Ibid.*, pp. 671-80; with Italy, pp. 504-12 and 680-2.

[20]Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 3.

[21]For the Treaty see, Salih R. Burcak, 'Ingiliz-Fransiz-Turk Ittifaki: 19 Ekim 1939' *AUSBFD,* vol. 4, nos. 3-4, (1949), pp. 347-74.

[22]Frank Tachau, *Turkey, The Politics, Democracy, and Development,* (New York: Praeger, 1984), p. 174. For the efforts by the Allied powers to bring Turkey into the war see, A. Sukru Esmer and Oral Sander, 'Ikinci Dunya Savasinda Turk Dis Politikasi' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi 1919-1995,* Ninth edition, (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), pp. 164-81. R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East,* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 29 and p. 69.

[23]Turkkaya Ataov, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1939-1945,* (Ankara: AUSBF, 1965), p. 93.

Turkey's entry into the UN consolidated its territorial integrity, and allowed it some measure of collective security.[24]

1.3. The Soviet threat and Turkey's accession into the NATO Alliance

In the aftermath of the war the Soviets declared that they had no intention of renewing the Turkish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship of 1925, which was due to expire at the end of 1945. Furthermore, Moscow put forward territorial claims to the two provinces of Kars and Ardahan in northern Turkey.[25] Moscow also attempted to change the Montreux Convention of 1936 and asked for a joint Turkish-Soviet control regime over the Turkish Straits, which would allow for a Soviet navy base.[26] Although, it was not anticipated that the Soviets could launch a war on Turkey, the threat was viewed as both imminent and clearly pronounced. Thus, the expansionist communist threat from its northern neighbour became a fundamental security concern for Ankara and soured the close relationship established during the Turkish War of Independence.

From the Russian perspective, Turkey's location gave it an important role. Indeed, control of the two important Straits -main passages from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean- was a key obstacle to Russia as far as its military, economic and security objectives were concerned, as past conflicts had revealed the vulnerability of Russia's Southern coast when the Straits were controlled by a hostile power in time of war.[27]

Despite Turkey's desire to remain neutral in the wake of the war, the Soviet threat left Turkey with no choice but to approach the Western world, particularly the US, to ask for military aid and help in the defence of the country.[28] This would eventually lead to membership of NATO, just as in the Ottoman era Turkey relied on the existence of a

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[24]Mehmet Gonlubol, *Turkish Participation in the UN 1945-1954,* (Ankara: AUSBF, 1963), p. 149.

[25]Feridun Cemal Erkin, *Dis Islerinde 34 Yil: Anilar Yorumlar,* (Ankara: TTK, 1980), pp. 146-7.

[26]Feridun Cemal Erkin, *Turk-Sovyet Iliskileri ve Bogazlar Meselesi,* (Ankara: 1968), pp. 253-4; Baskin Oran, 'Turkiye'nin Kuzeydeki Buyuk Komsu Sorunu Nedir? Turk-Sovyet Iliskileri 1939-1970', *AUSBFD,* no. 25, (1970), pp. 41-93.

[27]Cyril E. Black, 'The Pattern of Russian Objectives' in *Russian Foreign Policy,* Ivo Lederer (ed.), (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 10-16.

[28]See, Kamuran Gurun, *Turk-Sovyet Iliskileri, 1920-1953,* (Ankara: TTK, 1991).

balance of power in Europe for its own security.[29] In particular, Turkish policy makers hoped that inclusion in the Western alliance would provide security, both military and ideological, and material resources necessary for Turkey's rapid economic development.[30] In responding to this quest, the Truman Doctrine was designed to enhance the fighting capabilities of the Turkish army, air force and navy to help in building strategic roads and to restock Turkish arsenals and war reserves.[31] Between 1945 and 1947 Turkey received US$130 million (US$100 million of which came in the form of the Truman Doctrine military aid programme).[32]

Although Washington was initially reluctant to undertake new responsibilities in the Near East by accepting Turkey into NATO and the existence of some objections by some of the member states within the alliance, Turkey's successful participation in the Korean War led to an invitation to join the NATO alliance in 1952.[33] Upon admission into NATO, Turkey received significant support from the Alliance for constructing airfields, telecommunication systems, and energy pipelines.[34] Not surprisingly, Turkey's entry into NATO, caused concern among some of its neighbours, notably the Soviet Union, as it

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[29]Duygu B Sezer, *Turkey's Security Policies,* Adelphi Papers, (London: IISS, 1981), p. 12; Fethi Tevretoglu, *Dis Politika Gorusumuz,* (Ankara: Ajans-Turk, 1963), p. 10.

[30]Atilla Eralp, 'Turkey and the EC in the Changing Post-War International System' in *Turkey and Europe,* C. Balkir and A. Williams (eds.), (London: Pinter, 1993), p. 26.

[31]Melvyn P. Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The US, Turkey, and NATO, 1945-52', *The Journal of American History,* vol. 71, no. 4, (March 1985), p. 817; Nuri Eren, *Turkey: Today and Tomorrow,* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1963), p. 235.

[32]A. Suat Bilge, *Milletlerarasi Politika,* (Ankara: AUSBF, 1966), pp. 237-9; A. Haluk Ulman and Oral Sander, 'Turk Dis Politikasina Yon Veren Etkenler II (1923-1968)', *AUSBFD,* vol. 27, no. 1, (March 1972), p. 19.

[33]Feridun Cemal Erkin, *Dis Islerinde 34 Yil: Washington Buyukelciligi,* vol. 2, (Ankara: TTK, 1986), pp. 230-1. D. J. K. 'Greece, Turkey and NATO', *The World Today,* vol. 8, no. 4, (April 1952), p. 163; Turkkaya Ataov, *America, Turkey and NATO,* (Ankara: Aydinlik, 1969), p. 207; David R. Devereux, *The Formulation of British Defence Policy towards the Middle East 1948-56,* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 49; Aysegul Sever, *Soguk Savas Kusatmasinda Turkiye, Bati ve Ortadogu, 1945-1958,* (Istanbul: Boyut, 1997), pp. 79-85. For Turkish involvement in the Korean war see, Kemal H. Karpat, 'Political Development in Turkey, 1950-1970' *Middle Eastern Studies,* vol. 8, no. 3, (October 1972), p. 353; John M. Vander Lippe, 'Forgotten Brigade of the Forgotten War: Turkey's Participation in the Korean War, *Middle Eastern Studies,* vol. 36, no. 1, (January 2000), p. 96).

[34]Zeki Konuralp, *Sadece Diplomasi: Hatirat,* Second edition, (Istanbul: 1981), pp. 74-5; Dankward A. Rustow, *Turkey: America's Forgotten Ally,* (London and New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1989), p. 91; Yusuf Sarinay, *Turkiye'nin Bati Ittifakina Yonelisi ve NATO'ya Girisi,* (Ankara: Kultur Bakanligi, 1988).

complicated Soviet defences by exposing a large, industrial area of the USSR to Western monitoring in times of peace, and to Western armies in times of war.[35]

In addition to membership of NATO, Turkey joined the Council of Europe and the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Ankara also applied for membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1959 (it became an associate member in 1964) in order to achieve its political, and particularly economic objectives. Indeed, economic relations with the EEC rose steadily during the 1960s, as the EEC became Ankara's most important trade partner.[36]

1.4. The Baghdad Pact: Alienation from the Middle East

Once it joined NATO, Turkey shaped its entire external relations in line with the policies of the Washington-led alliance.[37] This became most evident with the Baghdad Pact, though the failure of the Pact showed that rigidly pro-Western policies could be unfavourable, and counter-productive to Turkey's interests in a region increasingly influenced by anti-Western Arab nationalism. For example, Turkey refused to support Algeria's struggle for independence from France for the sake of NATO solidarity (a decision that would cost Turkey dearly when the Cyprus issue was voted on at the UN).[38]

As part of its role in NATO, Turkey was ready to take on greater responsibilities in Middle Eastern affairs in order to block any Soviet expansion in the region.[39] Indeed, when the prospect for a Middle East Defence Organisation (MEDO) of 1952, primarily a British initiative, failed to get satisfactory interest from the regional countries, Britain

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[35]Ali Karaosmanoglu, 'Turkey and Southern Flank: Domestic and External Contexts' in *NATO's Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenges,* John Chipman (ed.), (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 291-2. A. Suat Bilge, *Turkiye-Sovyetler Birligi Iliskileri, 1920-1964: Guc Komsuluk,* (Ankara: Turkiye Is Bankasi, 1992), p. 335.

[36]Ahmet Gokdere, 'Turkiye-Avrupa Toplulugu Iliskileri, 1959-1991' in *Turkiye Ekonomisi 'Sektorel Gelismeleri',* Celik Aruoba and Cem Alpar (eds.), (Ankara: Turkiye Ekonomi Kurumu, 1992), p. 244.

[37]Edip Celik, *100 Soruda Turkiye'nin Dis Politika Tarihi,* (Istanbul: Gercek, 1969), p. 159; Haluk Ulman, 'NATO ve Turkiye', *AUSBFD,* vol. 22, no. 4, (December 1967), pp. 143-67.

[38]Mehmet Gonlubol and Haluk Ulman, 'Ikinci Dunya Savasindan Sonra Turk Dis Politikasi (1945-1965)' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi 1919-1995,* Ninth edition, (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), pp. 237-49.

[39]For the Soviet moves in the region see, J. M. Mackintosh, *Strategy and Tactics of Soviet Foreign Policy,*(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 119-20.

turned to Turkey to lead a regional defence organisation.[40] The pact intended to stop Soviet expansion into the Arab world was signed by Turkey and Iraq in Baghdad in 1955 and Pakistan, Britain and Iran joined later in the same year.[41] The US's participation in the pact, which was restricted to the military and the economic committee, came only in 1957.[42]

Turkey's lead role in this project was primarily intended to further secure its place in the Western system.[43] However, Turkey's involvement in the Middle Eastern affairs was not welcomed by the local actors, and to some extent, its pro-Western role lost it sympathy and credibility in the eyes of the Arab world. Likewise Turkey faced critics during the Bandung Conference of Afro-Asian nations.[44]

1.5. Towards a 'multi-dimensional foreign policy', 1960-1980

In the early 1960s, Turkey's foreign relations took a new 'multi-faceted' direction. Developments in international politics such as the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, the Cyprus crises of 1963-64 and 1974, the emergence of the East-West *détente*, and growing public awareness on foreign affairs all forced Turkish policy-makers to pursue relatively more independent and balanced policies with the Eastern Bloc, Europe, Third World

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[40]Brian H. Reid, 'The Northern Tier and the Baghdad Pact' in *The Foreign Policy of Churchill's Peacetime Administration 1951-1955,* John W. Young (ed.), (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), p. 160. John C. Campbell, 'American Search for Partners' in *Soviet-American Rivalry in the Middle East,* J. C. Hurewitz (ed.), (New York: Colombia University Press, 1969), p. 198.

[41]The pact became the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) and then the Regional Co-operation for Development (RCD) replaced it. In 1985, the RCD became the Economic Co-operation Organisation (ECO).

[42]For the American interests with regard to the organisation see, *FRUS*, vol. 12, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 613.

[43]For further discussion on the subject see, Hamit Ersoy, *Turkey's Involvement in Western Defence Initiatives in the Middle East in the 1950s,* Unpublished PhD thesis, (Durham: University of Durham, 1994), p. 219; Ismail Soysal, '1955 Baghdad Pact', *Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations*, (Annual 1990), pp. 87-8. For the reaction of regional countries to the pact, particularly the Arab world, see: Ali Karaosmanoglu, 'Turkey's Policy in the Middle East, *Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations*, (Annual 1986), p. 161; *Survey of International Affairs: 1951,* (London: RIIA, 1954), pp. 252-292; Abdulahat Aksin, *Turkiye'nin 1945'den Sonraki Dis Politika Gelismeleri ve Ortadogu Meselesi,* (Istanbul: Akgun, 1959), pp. 121-6; William Hale, 'Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis', *International Affairs,* vol. 68, no. 4, (October 1992), p. 681.

[44]Tachau, *op. cit.,* p.179; Ismail Soysal, 'Turkish-Arab Diplomatic Relations after the Second World War (1945-1986)', *Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations*, (Annual 1986), p. 254; Fahir Armaoglu, 'Ortadogu Komutanligindan Bagdad Paktina 1951-55', *TTK Belleten,* vol. 59, no. 224, (April 1995), p. 236.

countries and the Arab world without reducing the level of relations with its Western allies.[45]

The missile crisis

The Cuban missile crisis of 1962, the first test case of the viability of the US security assurances, brought a new dimension to Turkish-American relations. Unknown to Ankara, Turkey's Jupiter missiles (deployed in 1959) became central to the discussions between the two super powers during the crisis.[46] Ankara regarded the missiles as a symbol of the Alliance's determination to counter the Russian threat to Turkey and opposed the removal of the Jupiter missiles.[47] However, the agreement between the US and the Soviets required Washington withdraw the missiles from Turkish territories in late 1963.[48] Turkey's disappointment with this decision was great as it appeared that the US was willing to sacrifice Turkish interests for other consideration, and relations were further damaged at the time of Johnson letter of 1964 on the Cyprus issue, which warned Ankara not to invade the island.[49]

The Cyprus crisis became another issue to test the value of Turkey's relationship with the US. Following British withdrawal from rule on the island in 1960, Cyprus increasingly became the cause of disagreement between the two Aegean neighbours, who were at that time even talking about the possibility of a Greek-Turkish customs union.[50] In the 1950s the 'Enosis' movement (union of Cyprus with Greece) gained momentum against British

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[45]Omer Kurkcuoglu, 'Dis Politika Nedir? Turkiye'deki Dunu ve Bugunu', *AUSBFD*, vol. 35, nos. 1-4, (1980), p. 324.

[46]For the deployment of the missiles see, Bruce R. Kuniholm, 'Turkey and the West since World War II' in *Turkey between East and West,* Vojtech Mostny and R. Craig Nation (eds.), (Colorado: Westview, 1996), p. 53; Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis,* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969).

[47]*FRUS-1961-1963,* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1994), p. 731.

[48]John Simkin, *Turning Points in History: The Cuban Missile Crisis,* (Brighton: Spartacus, 1988), pp. 39-40.

[49]Tachau, *op. cit.*, p. 186; Sezai Orkunt, *Turkiye-Amerika Askeri Iliskileri,* (Istanbul: Milliyet, 1978), p. 336; Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey,* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 139; Aysegul Sever, 'Yeni Bulgular Isiginda 1962 Kuba Krizi ve Turkiye', *AUSBFD,* vol. 52, (1997), p. 660.

[50]For Turco-Greek relations between 1950 and 1954 see, M. Murat Hatipoglu, *Yakin Tarihte Turkiye ve Yunanistan, 1923-1954,* (Ankara: Siyasal, 1997), pp. 287-318; Richard Clogg, 'Troubled Alliance:

rule with the birth of 'EOKA' (National Organization for the Cyprus Struggle).[51] For Turkey, the ensuing violence on the island was not only a concern for the safety of the Turkish minority, one fifth of the island's population, but even more so, it was the potential threat to its own security. If Cyprus, only 50 miles from the Turkish coast, were to be joined to Greece, then the Greek possessions, including the Aegean islands, would half-encircle Turkey.[52] The agreement reached over the constitution between Britain, Greece, Turkey, and the representatives of both communities, which led the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, only helped to the postponement of the growing violence.[53]

When the Turkish armed forces attempted to make an amphibious landing on the island to help Turkish Cypriots, Washington strongly opposed the operation. The letter from president Johnson in June 1964 made it clear that NATO might not defend Turkey in case of a Soviet attack in response to action in Cyprus.[54] Eventually Turkey could not go further and abandoned the operation. In 1974[55], following a coup by supporters of 'Enosis' backed by the military regime in Athens against Cypriot president Makarios, Turkey entered the island.[56] The US administration began an arms embargo, which remained in

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Greece and Turkey' in *Greece in the 1980s,* Richard Clogg (ed.), (London and Hampshire: Macmillan, 1983), p. 130.

[51]Salahi R. Sonyel, *The Turco-Greek Conflict,* (London: Cyprus Turkish Association), p. 70.

[52]H. Davison Roderic, *Turkey,* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968) , p. 151.

[53]As 'guarantors', Turkey, Greece and Britain undertook to safeguard the independence of the island. Bahceli, *op. cit.,* pp. 43-6; Radha Kumar, 'The Troubled History of Partition', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 76, no. 1, (January-February 1997), p. 28; *Foreign Office,* 371/180150, January 1965; *Foreign Office,* 371/174756, October 1964.

[54]For the letter and the Turkish prime minister Ismet Inonu's reply see, *The Middle East Journal,* vol. 20, no. 3, (Summer 1966), pp. 386-93.

[55]Turkey controlled the 33 percent of the island. The failure of the subsequent talks between the two communities saw to the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983, but so far it is recognized only by Turkey. Polyvios G. Polyviou, 'Cyprus: What is To Be Done?', *International Affairs,* vol. 52, no. 4, (October 1976), pp. 583-5; Suha Bolukbasi, 'The Cyprus Dispute in the Post-Cold War Era', *The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin,* vol. 18, no. 1, (Spring 1994), pp. 3-6. For the developments leading to the intervention see, John Reddeway, *The British Connection With Cyprus Since Independence,*(Oxford: University Printing House, 1986), p. 67; Kayhan Saglamer, *Kibris Harekati: Bir Basbakanin Dogusu,* Third edition, (Istanbul: Met-Er, 1977), pp. 110-1. M; Ali Birand, *30 Sicak Gun,* (Istanbul: Milliyet, 1975).

[56]Turco-Greek relations were further deteriorated following the intervention as other disputes such as minorities, Aegean-related issues, Greek approach towards the Turkish-EU relations all became more

effect for three years.[57] Turkey acknowledged that its national interests were not necessarily in conformity with those of the Alliance or the US, and as such placing its entire security system into the Alliance could be restrictive.[58] Although the Soviet Union and the EEC countries remained generally perceptive about the first military intervention, they became more critical following the second phase of the operation. The EEC's nine foreign ministers affirmed their attachment to the independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus, though they refrained from taking initiatives of their own and saw their role as one of support to the efforts of the UN.[59]

Towards a multidimensional foreign policy

Turkey's 'one directional foreign policy' approach soon left Ankara isolated in international circles. For example, in 1964, the Greek Cypriot government agreed with Athens to take the Cyprus issue to the UN.[60] The issue was voted on at the General Assembly in 1965 and only five countries supported the Turkish case while forty-seven Non-Aligned members voted against Turkey, and fifty-four abstained, including members

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visible. For the Aegean-related issues see, Bahceli, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-2; Huseyin Pazarci, 'Ege Denizindeki Turk-Yunan Sorunlarinin Hukuki Yonu' in *Turk-Yunan Uyusmazligi,* Semih Vaner (ed.), (Ankara: Metis, 1988), pp. 108-12; Philon Alexander, 'Greek-Turkish Relations since 1974' in *The US Foreign Policy Regarding Greece, Turkey and Cyprus-The Rule of Law and American Interests,* (Washington: American Hellenic Institute, 1989), p. 7; Ugur Kilinc, 'Turk-Yunan Karasulari Uyusmazligi', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 1, no. 4, (Winter 1994-1995), pp. 267-80; Thanos Veremis, *Greek Security: Issues and Politics,* Adelphi Paper no. 182, (London: IISS, 1982), p. 15. Sukru S. Gurel, 'Turkey and Greece: A Difficult Aegean Relationship' in *Turkey and Europe*, C. Balkir and A. Williams (eds.), (London: Pinter, 1993), p. 168; Aslan Gunduz, *Limni Adasinin Hukuki Statusu Uzerine Turk Yunan Uyusmazligi,* (Istanbul: Otag, 1985), pp. 33-4; Suha Bolukbasi, 'The Turco-Greek Dispute: Issues, Policies, and Prospects' in *Turkish Foreign Policy*, C. H. Dodd (ed.), (Cambridge: The Eatlon Press, 1992), pp. 43-4. For the issue of minorities see, Baskin Oran, *Turk-Yunan Iliskilerinde Bati Trakya Sorunu,* (Ankara: Mulkiyeliler Birligi Vakfi, 1996).

[57]For the impacts of arms embargo on Turkish-US relations see, Faruk Sonmezoglu, *ABD'nin Turkiye Politikasi (1964-1980),* (Istanbul: Der, 1995), pp. 105-8; Fahir Armaoglu, *Belgelerle Turk-Amerikan Munasabetleri,* (Ankara: TTK, 1991), pp. 286-7; C. H. Dodd, *Democracy and Development in Turkey,* (N. Humberside: The Eatlon Press, 1979), p. 14.

[58]Mehmet Gonlubol and Haluk Ulman, 'Turk Dis Politikasinin Yirmi Yili: 1945-1965', *AUSBFD,* vol. 21, no. 1, (1966), p. 175; Onder Ari, *Uluslararasi Iliskiler,* (Istanbul: Der, 1997), p. 114; Bruce R. Kuniholm, 'Turkey and NATO: Past, Present, and Future', *Orbis,* (Summer 1993), pp. 421-45.

[59]Mehmet Gonlubol and Omer Kurkcuoglu '1973-1983 Donemi', in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi 1919-1995,* Ninth edition, (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), p. 577; http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa.nsf/CQEUCyprusQuestion?OpenForm

[60]Philip Windsor, *NATO and the Cyprus Crisis,* Adelphi Papers, (London: IISS, November 1964), pp. 18-9.

of the Eastern Block and NATO.[61] In particular, the Arab world's stance in favour of Greece was a great blow to Ankara and served to show the downside of its pro-western Middle East policy.[62]

Doubts about the value of the NATO alliance also spread from within the governmental and intellectual elite to the public at large and Turkey's total loyalty to the West came under severe criticism. This eventually forced Turkish foreign policy makers to reassess traditional policies and pursue more 'respectful national polices'.[63] Taken together, it became apparent that Turkey would face isolation in the international arena and marginalisation in its own region unless it shifted towards a multi-directional foreign policy while maintaining its ties with the West.

These developments also coincided with the Soviet policy of reapproacment with Turkey. After Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviets sought reconciliation with Turkey at a time of East-West *détente*. In 1964, Turkey's foreign minister visited Moscow, the first such visit in 25 years. This was followed by an exchange between the prime ministers of the two countries. Within this framework, economic relations improved in the form of a US$200 million Soviet credit in 1967 as well as a number of mainly industrial projects undertaken with Soviet assistance in Turkey.[64] By 1978, the Soviet Union was aiding forty-four different development projects in Turkey and by the end of the decade Turkey received more Soviet economic assistance than any country in the Third World except

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[61]Sukru Gurel, *Tarihsel Boyut Icinde Turk Yunan Iliskileri (1821-1993),* (Ankara: Umit, 1993) p. 59; Galia Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East from World War Two to Gorbachev,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 249-50.

[62]Some of these states, in particular Egypt, went so far as even to supply arms and military training to the Greek Cypriots. Oya. A. Mughusuddin, 'Turkish-Arab Relations, 1945-1975', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 17, nos. 1-2, (1993), p. 127.

[63]Kemal H. Karpat, 'Recent Political Developments in Turkey and their Social Background, *International Affairs,* vol. 38, no. 3, (July 1962), pp. 305-23; Haluk Gerger, *Mayinli Tarlada Dis Politika,* (Istanbul: Hil, 1983), p. 58.

[64]Golan, *op. cit.,* p. 251; Udo Steinbach, 'Turkey: Diversification of Foreign Policy', *Ausssen Politik,* vol. 24, no. 4, p. 441.

Cuba.[65] In the face of a US arms embargo, Turkey also sought to improve military relations with the Soviet Union.[66]

Alongside the Soviet Union, Turkey also broadened its contacts with the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) members, the Arab countries in the Middle East, the non-aligned countries, and with communist countries of South-East Europe without cutting of its relations with the West.[67] The successive left-wing Republican people's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) governments in this period under the leadership of Bulent Ecevit, (who was known for his ideological sympathy for Socialist governments) and the CHP's short-lived 1974 coalition with Necmettin Erbakan's National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi, MSP), which had close ideological affinities with the Islamic world, made it easier for good relations.[68] In general, given Turkey's disagreements with the US in this period, Ecevit was particularly keen to re-orientate Turkish foreign policy towards Europe, particularly Germany and the Scandinavian countries.[69]

In the context of Turkey's policy shift to pursue a more balanced foreign policy, Ankara also extended its relations with the Middle Eastern countries, which were not warm up until the mid 1960s due to several reasons. For modern Turkey, founded on Kemalist principles, the priority was to integrate with the Western world and its civilization by developing a secular political structure, and thus it had to eliminate the theocratic remnants of the Ottoman Empire.[70] Thus, despite its common cultural, religious and historical affinities with the Arab nations of the Middle East, Ankara chose not to show much interest in the region and to some extent avoided having close relations with the

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[65]Kuniholm, 'Turkey and the West', *op. cit.*, p. 57.

[66]Gulnur Aybet, *Turkey's Foreign Policy and its Implications for the West*, (London: RUSI, 1994), p. 6.

[67]For Turkey's economic relations in this period see, Duygu Sezer, 'Turkiye'nin Ekonomik Iliskileri' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi 1919-1995,* Ninth edition, (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), especially pp. 459-87; Ulman and Sander, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[68]Nusret Kiriscioglu, *Partilerimiz ve Liderleri,* (Istanbul: Baha, 1975), pp. 295-8.

[69]Erik J. Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* (London: L. B. Tauris and Co, 1995), p. 260; Sonmezoglu, *op.cit.*, pp. 104-5.

[70]Ali L. Karaosmanoglu, 'Turkey's Security and the Middle East', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 62, no. 1, (Fall 1983), p. 162; Zekeriya Kursun, *Yol Ayriminda Turk-Arab Iliskileri,* (Istanbul: Irfan, 1992).

Arab world. Also, Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognise the new state of Israel in 1949, and in particular its poor image resulting from the several issues such as the Baghdad Pact experience; Turkey's stance with the Western powers with respect to the Suez Canal crisis in 1956; and the use of US bases in Turkey during the American intervention on Lebanon in 1958 all distanced Turkey and the Arab world from one another.[71] Finally, considering Turkey's political, economic and military needs, the region was not in a position to offer much in this respect. The process of integration with the Western Block in the Cold War environment removed Turkey's focus from regional politics all together. Within this context, as far as Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East was concerned, it was shaped as non-interference in intra-Arab disputes; compartmentalization of policy towards the West and policy towards the Middle East and the maintenance of bilateral relations with all states of the region.[72]

The new international environment and Ankara's desire to develop wide ranging ties to gain political support for the national issues, new markets for its goods, as well as the oil crisis of 1973-1974 all helped the process of normalization of relations with the Middle Eastern Arab countries. Ankara also initially hoped to cultivate Arab support on the Cyprus problem. In this context, a truly national policy with respect to the Arab world began to emerge in the early 1970s.[73]

The new Turkish policy in the Middle East was seen in action during the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars. Ankara did not allow the US to use military bases in Turkey to aid Israel, and diplomatically took a more pro-Arab position over the Arab-Israeli dispute at

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[71]Sule Kut, 'Filistin Sorunu ve Turkiye' in *Ortadogu Sorunlari ve Turkiye,* Haluk Ulman (ed.), (Istanbul: TUSES, 1991), pp. 14-6.

[72]Phlip Robins, 'Turkish Foreign Policy and the Gulf Crisis: Adventurist or Dynamic?' in *Turkish Foreign Policy*, C. H. Dodd (ed.), (Cambridge: The Eatlon Press, 1992), p. 85.

[73]Orhan Soysal, *An Analysis of the Influences of Turkey's Alignment with the West and of the Arab-Israeli conflict upon Turkish-Israeli and Turkish-Arab Relations,* Unpublished PhD thesis, (Princeton: Princeton University, 1983), p. 248; For Islamic countries' response to the changes in Turkish foreign policy see, Mahmut Bali Aykan, *Ideology and National Interest in Turkish Foreign Policy Toward the Muslim World: 1960-1987,* Unpublished PhD thesis, (Virginia: University of Virginia, 1988), p. 377.

the UN and other international forums. Turkey also granted diplomatic recognition to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole representative of the Palestinian people in 1976 and consented in the establishment of the PLO office in Ankara in 1979.[74] Furthermore, Turkey joined the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1976, which provided Ankara with a forum to have close contacts with the Islamic world and to place issues such as Cyprus before its members. It also enabled Turkey to balance the negative policies of the Non-Aligned countries, where most of the Arab countries were represented. Importantly, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which was established in 1983 and recognized only by Turkey, received observer status. This obviously helped them to defend the Turkish case.[75] Turkey also gradually expanded economic ties and built up its exports with the oil-producing Arab countries during this period.[76]

1.6. Economy-oriented foreign policies, 1980-1989

In September 1980, Turkish democratic development was once more interrupted by a military *coup d'état* in the face of the failure of successive governments to stop the growing political violence, economic crisis and political instability.[77] The elections of 1983 saw the return of democratic rule and the election of the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi, ANAP) under the leadership of Turgut Ozal, who had served as a deputy prime minister in charge of the economy during the military regime. Until 1991 successive ANAP governments added a new dimension to traditional Turkish foreign policy with economic and trade relations playing an increasingly important role in the foreign policy process.[78] During this time, Turkish policy makers sought to achieve two main objectives:

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[74]Ramazan Gozen, 'Patterns in Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour towards the Middle East', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 19, nos. 1-2, (1995), p. 75.

[75]Mevhibe Yuksel, 'Turkey and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC)', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 15, nos. 1-2, (1991), p. 71; Soysal, 'Turkish', *op. cit.*, p. 262.

[76]Andrew Mango, 'Turkish Policy in the Middle East' in *Turkish Foreign Policy*, C. H. Dodd (ed.), (Cambridge: The Eatlon, 1992), p. 66.

[77]It was estimated that more than 5,000 people killed in the political violence before the intervention.. Nursen Mazici, *Turkiye'de Askeri Darbeler ve Sivil Rejime Etkileri*, (Istanbul: Gur, 1989), p. 172.

[78]With the new economic policies, export revenues increased from US$3 billion in 1980 to US$13 billion in 1990, while imports rose from US$8 to US$22.3 billion. Turkey's GNP doubled in the same period, from US$73 billion to US$152 billion. Turkey also extended its economic and trade relations with the

the transformation of the economy in a stable environment and around Turkey the resolution of the old disputes with neighbours such as Iran, Iraq, Syria, Greece, and the Soviet Union through improved economic and trade relations.[79]

Turgut Ozal, prime minister (1983-1989) and president (1989-1993), dominated Turkish politics at home and abroad for almost all of this decade. Indeed, he was hailed in many circles as a 'revolutionary statesman at the top of the state'.[80] Ozal argued that a strong economy with expanding trade capacity and a firm economic infrastructure could open up new opportunities for Turkey abroad.[81] He also argued that Turkey needed to work with both the Western and Muslim world and argued that 'the stronger you are in the East, the stronger you are in the West.'[82]

The new economy-oriented foreign policies were well practised during the eight year Iran-Iraq War. Turkey refrained from taking sides and stayed neutral throughout the war, and continued its good relationships with both of the neighbouring countries while

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Eastern block countries, in particular, with the Middle Eastern Arab countries as well as other countries such as China, the Far East, and North America. Trade volume with the Islamic world was 42 percent of the whole trade, which was 4-5 percent in the 1960s. For Turkish economy and its foreign economic relations between 1980 and 1990 see, Nihat Tore, 'Dis Ticaret ve Doviz Kuru Politikalari' in *Turkiye Ekonomisi 'Sektorel Gelismeleri'*, Celik Aruoba and Cem Alpar (eds.), (Ankara: Turkiye Ekonomi Kurumu, 1992), pp. 193-202; Ekrem Donek, 'Turkiye'nin Dis Borc Sorunu ve 1980 Sonrasi Boyutlari', *AUSBFD*, vol. 50, no. 12, (1995), pp. 173-84; Paul B. Henze, 'Turkey: Toward the Twenty-First Century' in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, Graham Fuller (ed.), (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 15-7; Y. Kepenek and N. Yenturk, *Turkiye Ekonomisi*, (Istanbul: Remzi, 1994), p. 407; Golan, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-7; Soysal, 'Turkish', *op. cit.*, p. 264; *Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1989*, (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1991), p. 15; *Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri*, (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1998), p. 515; *Turkiye Istatistik Yilligi 1998*, (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1999), p. 499.

[79]For new economic policies see, Ziya Onis, 'The State and Economic Development in Contemporary Turkey: Etatism to Neo-liberalism and Beyond' in *Turkey between East and West*, Vojtech Mostny and R. Craig Nation (eds.), (Colorado: Westview, 1996), p. 163; Elie Kedourie, *Politics in the Middle East*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 150; Z. Y. Hershlag, *The Contemporary Turkish Economy*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), pp. 43-4; Gulten Kazgan, *Ekonomide Disa Ack Buyume*, (Istanbul: Altin, 1995), pp. 391-401.

[80]Ramazan Gozen, 'Turgut Ozal and Turkish Foreign Policy: Style and Vision', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 20, nos. 3-4, (1996), p. 91.

[81]*Basbakan Turgut Ozal'in Konusma, Mesaj, Beyanat ve Mulakatlari*, (Ankara: Basbakanlik Basimevi, 1986), p. 49; Hasan Cemal, *Ozal Hikayesi*, Eight edition, (Ankara: 1990), p. 294.

[82]Gulistan Gurbey, 'Ozal Donemi Turk Dis Politikasi', *Dis Politka Dergisi*, vol. 6, no, 2, (December 1995), p. 56.

utilising emerging trade opportunities.[83] For example, in 1985, Turkey's trade with Iraq totalled around US$2 billion, of which Turkish exports amounted to approximately US$1 billion, while it was only US$113 million in 1979. In the same year, trade volume with Iran reached US$2.3 billion while Turkish exports exceeded US$1 billion.[84]

Furthermore, the economy and trade-centred foreign policies were applied to improve the tense Turkish-Greek relationships. Ozal was of the belief that these policies could be the key instruments in resolving differences. As Ercument Yavuzalp, under-secretary of the Turkish foreign ministry during the Ozal era, noted in his memoirs Ozal was of the belief that steady economic and trade relations would even persuade the Greek premier Andreas Papandreou (who was known for his uncompromising stance against Turkey) to start a mutual dialogue.[85]

The rise of the Kurdish issue

During the 1980s Kurdish guerrillas actions for an independent Kurdistan, and later for some kind of autonomy, based on Marxist-Leninist ideology in the eastern part of Turkey became a national security preoccupation.[86] Until the 1980s, Kurdish nationalism had a religious/cultural character and apart from a few revolts was not violent. However, the birth of Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, PKK) in 1978, which

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[83]*Gelisen Turkiye'de Hukumetin Alti Yillik Icraati: (1983-1989),* vol. 2, (Ankara: Basbakanlik Basimevi, 1989), p. 91; Henri J. Barkey, 'The Silent Victor: Turkey's Role in the Gulf War' in *The Iran-Iraq War: Impact and Implications,* Efraim Karsh (ed.), (London: Jaffa Centre for Strategic Studies and Macmillan, 1987), pp. 133-53.

[84]*Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1982,* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1984), p. 11 and *Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1989,* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1991), p. 15.

[85]Ercument Yavuzalp, *Liderlerimiz ve Dis Politika: Bir Diplomat Gozuyle,* (Ankara: Bilgi, 1996), p. 324; For Turco-Greek relations in this period see, M. Ali Birand, 'Turkey and the '"Davos Process": Experiences and Prospects' in *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s,* Dimitri Costas (ed.), (London and Hampshire: Macmillan, 1991), p. 33; *Basbakan Turgut Ozal'in Basin Mensuplarina Aciklama, Mulakat ve Konusmalari,* (Ankara: Basbakanlik Basimevi, 1989), p. 50; *Gelisen Turkiye'de,* op.cit., pp. 81-4.

[86]For an extensive research on PKK's history, ideology and methods see, Nihat Ali Ozcan, *PKK: Tarihi, Ideolojisi ve Yontemi,* (Ankara: ASAM, 1999); Ismet Imset, *Ayrilikci Siddetin 20 Yili (1973-1992),* Second edition, (Ankara: TDN, 1992). For a full discussion on Turkish nationalism and other ethnic groups see, Hugh Poulton, *Top Hat, Grey Wolf and Crescent,: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic,* (London: C. Hurst, 1997), pp. 114-129. For the Turkish state discourse on the Kurdish identity see, Mesut Yegen, 'The Turkish State Discourse and the Exclusion of Kurdish Identity' in *Turkey: Identity, Democracy and Politics,* Sylvia Kedourie (ed.), (London: Frank Class, 1996), pp. 217-29.

established in the Syrian controlled Bekaa Valley in Lebanon in 1980, brought a new dimension to the separatist Kurdish nationalism.[87] It relied heavily on violence and targeted the security forces and civilians as well as economic targets.[88] 3,568 people were killed between 1984-1991 including 1,278 civilians, and 846 security member forces.[89]

It appeared that some of the neighbouring countries, most notably Syria, played the Kurdish card as a lever in their relations with Turkey.[90] Following Turkey's decision to exploit the Euphrates and Tigris rivers for irrigation and hydroelectricity within the South East Anatolia Project (*Guneydogu Anadolu Projesi*, GAP) in the early 1980s, the Syrian government provided the PKK with shelter and weaponry, and trained its fighters in order to pressure Ankara on the water issue.[91] Syria's policy had some success, to the extent that Ozal believed that to combat PKK terror effectively, the water issue between the two countries needed resolution. As such, in 1987 he became the first Turkish prime minister to visit Syria, and signed an agreement in which Turkey promised to release a minimum annual average of 500 cum/s from the Euphrates waters.[92] It was also hoped that through improved economic relations with Damascus, would reduce Syrian support given to the PKK issue could be curbed with the support of Syria, thus, Turkish exports to Syria

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[87]See, Emin Gurses, *Ayrilikci Terorun Anatomisi/IRA-ETA-PKK,* (Istanbul: Baglam 1997), pp. 75-105; Henri J. Barkey, and Graham E. Fuller, 'Turkey's Kurdish Question: Critical Turning Points and Missed Opportunities', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 51, no. 1, (Winter 1997), pp. 66-7.

[88]For the Kurdish issue see, 'Turkey and the Gulf War: Creation of a new centre of threat', and 'The Kurdish problem: Turkey's hidden war', *Chapter Four and Five.*

[89]Kemal Kirisci, 'The Challenges of Terrorism: A Turkish Perspective', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 20, nos. 3-4, (1996), p. 4; Hakan Yavuz, 'Turkey's "Imagined Enemies": Kurds and Islamist', *The World Today*, vol. 52, no. 4, (1996), p. 101.

[90]Graham E. Fuller, 'Turkey's New Eastern Orientation' in *Turkey's New Geopolitics from the Balkans to Western China,* Graham E. Fuller (ed.), (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), p. 56.

[91]*Financial Times,* 21 May 1992; 'The water dispute: Source for future conflicts', *Chapter Two;* Sukru Elekdag, '2½ War Strategy', *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (March-May 1996), p. 46.

[92]'Turkiye Icin bir "Supolitik" Olabilir mi?', in *Su Sorunu, Turkiye ve Ortadogu,* Sabahattin Sen (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1993), p. 449; Gun Kut, 'Burning Waters: The Hydropolitics of the Euphrates and Tigris', *New Perspectives on Turkey,* (Fall 1993), pp. 7-8.

reached a record level, US$143 million in 1988 and US$177 million in 1989 (it was only US$60 million in 1987).[93]

As shown in this chapter, throughout the Cold War years Turkey enjoyed a relatively peaceful environment in its region, as it was not subjected to any aggression in any form, thanks to the stability created by the bi-polar international system and the security guarantees provided by the Alliance. Having a geo-strategic importance for the West against the Soviet threat owing to its location, Turkey successfully exploited this status to achieve its political, economic and strategic objectives. However, the political developments of the late 1980s, which brought down the Soviet empire and thus the bi-polar system of the Cold War after over four decades, brought serious challenges to this established Turkish foreign and security policy understanding. As the sudden developments led to significant changes in the areas of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the old Soviet territories, given Turkey's involvement in these regions as a result of its geography and history, the new changes had a profound impact on Turkey's strategic environment. To what extent Turkish policies became successful in view of the brand new opportunities and challenges emerged with the new era to the best interest of the country in the initial decade of the post-Cold War period is the subject of coming chapters.

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[93]*Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1982,* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1984), p. 11 and *Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1989,* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1991), p. 15.

PART TWO

MARGINALISATION OF TURKEY IN THE NEW EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Having lost its strategic importance with the end of the Cold War, there was a growing perception in Ankara that the West would now view Turkey as a 'burden' rather than an important 'asset'. As Europe turned its focus towards the reconstruction of Eastern Europe, other regions in the immediate vicinity of Turkey such as the Caucasia and the Middle East, and to certain extent the Balkans, became of only secondary strategic importance. Thus, Ankara and Brussels had conflicting views over priorities on what was perceived as a threat in the new political environment.

Turkey feared that NATO was now subject to erosion and possibly disbandment. Furthermore, European Union's (EU) growing desire to build a purely European defence mechanism, which may have undermined or weakened the transatlantic Alliance caused Ankara serious anxieties. More importantly, the EU's persistent rejection of Turkey's membership application after almost half a century of Turkish-EU relations not to mention its clear preference given to Central and Eastern European countries, confirmed Turkey's fears that it might even face marginalisation and exclusion from the 'new Europe' all together. The psychology of being left out of Europe in fact drove Turkey to focus on other regions such as the Caucasia, Central Asia, the Black Sea, the Balkans and the Middle East while attempting to build alliance relationships with a number of countries.

CHAPTER TWO

ISOLATION OF TURKEY IN THE NEW EUROPEAN SECURITY SYSTEM

2.1. Turkey's place in the new European security architecture, the WEU and the ESDI/ESDP: Asset or burden?

Changing relationship with the Western European Union (WEU)

In 1991, President Ozal told the WEU Assembly 'the EC and the WEU will never reach their natural and logical limits without Turkey'.[1] In actual fact, starting from the early 1990s, the Union has started to gain a greater say within NATO in overcoming the inability of the EU to provide a security dimension to European unity.[2] The EU's Maastricht Summit of 1991 ended with substantial breakthroughs not only for the EU but also for the WEU. The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 stated that the WEU would be developed as the defence component of the EU and European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance. As such, the WEU transformed and equipped itself with certain bodies such as the defence planning cell and the European Corps. It also established strong relations with the Eastern and Central European countries through the 'associate partnership' programme.

Furthermore, it took part in various operations where NATO faced difficulties in co-ordinating its forces in response to 'out-of-area' crises, participated in naval and air surveillance mission during the UN embargo on Serbia and Montenegro in 1992 as well as in both Gulf Wars.[3] The WEU also appeared to be an organisation suited to the defence and security needs of European nations due to its working links with NATO; its close relations with the EU; its freedom from out-of-area restrictions unlike NATO; the existence of the European Corps; and its wide ranging of membership and Assembly, which was the only

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[1] *Newspot*, 6 June 1991.

[2] For the history of WEU see, Alfred Cahen, *Western European Union and NATO: Building a European Defence Identity within Context of Atlantic Solidarity*, (London: Brassey's, 1989). *The Rome Declaration*, Issued by the Foreign and Defence Ministers of the WEU, Rome, 26-27 October 1984; *Platform on European Security Interests*, Issued by the Foreign and Defence Ministers of the WEU, The Hague, 27 October 1987.

[3] A. Jacomet, 'The role of WEU in the Gulf Crisis' in *Western Europe and the Gulf*, N. Gnesotto and J. Roper (eds.), (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 1992), p. 160; Willem Van Eekelen, 'WEU and the Gulf Crisis', *Survival*, vol. 32, no. 6, (November-December 1990), p. 528; *WEU's Operational*

European forum for parliamentarians to discuss security and defence-related issues without the presence of Russia and the US.[4]

With Maastricht the EU member states were invited to join the WEU or to become observers and the other European member states of NATO were invited to become associate members.[5] Thus, the Turkish application for full membership was met with the granting of associate membership.[6] In Ankara's view, this was not satisfactory unless the decision was only a temporary one and, as Turkish foreign minister Hikmet Cetin explained, 'Turkey cannot accept a status as a second class member within the WEU.'[7]

According to the WEU's Petersberg Declaration of 1992, which outlined the rights and responsibilities of those countries with associate membership, Turkey would be able to participate fully in the WEU Council meetings, working groups and other bodies (such as the defence planning team and the Assembly) unless it was otherwise restricted; would make a financial contribution to the organisation's budget; would take part on the same basis as full members in WEU military operations to which they committed forces; and would associate itself with the decisions taken by member states and then participate in their implementation except where restrictions applied.[8]

However, Turkey was crucially excluded from the decision-making process in the

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Organisation and the Yugoslav Crisis, Document 1337, 5 November 1992, Assembly of WEU.

[4]Hans Van Mierlo, 'The WEU and NATO: Prospects for a More Balanced Relationship', *NATO Review*, vol. 43, no. 2, (March 1995), pp. 8-9. However, despite these advantages the WEU falls down on certain issues, which stand in the way of any serious ambition to establish a European collective defence in any field other than crisis management. For an in-depth discussion see, *Organising Security in Europe-Defence Aspects*, Document no: 1510, 8 February 1996, Assembly of WEU, Paris, p. 2; *Financial Times*, 13 May 1997; 'The Defence of Europe', *The Economist*, 25 February 1995, p. 25.

[5]Article J. 4 of Title V and Article B of Title I (Common provisions). *Treaty on European Union*, 7 February 1992.

[6]'Ankara BAB'da Kotunun Iyisiyle Yetindi', *Cumhuriyet*, 18 July 1992; 'Turkey Half Joins Europe's Military Wing', *Turkish Probe*, 1 December 1992;

[7]*TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, vol. 20, no. 2, 11 November 1992, pp. 370-5; *Cumhuriyet*, 14 November 1992; Cigdem Nas, 'Bati Avrupa Birligi Olusumu Karsisinda Turkiye'nin Durumu' in *Degisen Dunya ve Turkiye*, Faruk Sonmezoglu (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1996), p. 83.

[8]'Document on Associate Membership of WEU of the Republic of Iceland, The Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Turkey', *Letter From the Assembly*, no. 14, February 1993.

WEU Council and did not have the right to block a decision that was the subject of consensus among the member states.[9] According to one internal report prepared by the WEU Assembly, Turkey has placed itself in a difficult position by giving up its freedom of action by associating itself with a European security alliance without having the protection offered by that alliance. It found itself participating in the implementation of decisions taken by member states without being able to participate in the decision-making process other than in a consultative capacity.[10] Thus, Turkey found itself shouldering WEU responsibilities without getting any genuine security guarantees in return.

Indeed, Turkey, a NATO member for four decades, found itself treated as a second-class member within the WEU. Thus ANAP, the main opposition party at the time, stated that it would vote against ratification of the WEU.[11] For that reason, as noted by Omur Orhun, the head of international security affairs at the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Ankara appealed that an institutional basis must be provided for its access to the security dimension of EU's deliberations since the WEU is the military pillar of the EU and all the decisions were taken in the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Otherwise, Turkey would be left in an unenviable position of associating itself with decisions taken elsewhere or distancing itself totally from the WEU, either of which would not be desirable.[12]

The creation of The European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI)/The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)

The second issue in Turkey's relationship with the WEU and probably the most important one, as it further isolated Ankara in the European security environment, was

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[9]*The Enlargement of WEU*, Document 1340, Assembly of Western European Union.

[10]*Turkey*, Document 1341, 6 November 1992, Assembly of Western European Union, p. 23; Murat Yetkin, *Ates Hattinda Aktif Politika: Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Ortadogu Ucgeninde Turkiye*, (Istanbul: Alan, 1992), pp. 323-4.

[11]*Financial Times*, 15 October 1992.

[12]Omur Orhun, 'Turkey, Norway and the US in the New European Security Context', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 21, nos. 1-2, (1997), p. 10.

EU's increasing efforts to strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance, especially at the expense of a transatlantic NATO. By the second half of the 1990s, it appeared that a consensus was emerging among the member states to move towards some sort of an autonomous role within the Alliance. As one French politician noted 'now that Europe has a single currency, it is high time that it equips itself with a defence and security identity.'[13] In fact, with the Maastricht Treaty, which had assigned the WEU the role of its defence component, the member countries agreed to accelerate political union by implementing a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) to replace the European Political Co-operation framework (EPC).[14] It was envisaged that the CFSP would cover all matters regarding the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence capability.[15] NATO welcomed this move by which the EU would take greater responsibility for their common security and defence, and supported it for the further development of close co-operation between NATO and the WEU on the basis of complementarity.[16] Later in 1994 with the introduction of a 'Combined Joint Task Force' (CJTF), as a new concept in the use of arms, NATO allowed the European allies to direct operations under the aegis of WEU. This meant that the Alliance, for the first time, had given the WEU increased responsibilities as a European pillar of NATO.[17] In 1996, this was further consolidated following the agreement to have an ESDI within NATO. This was expected to replace the WEU in the future.[18] The ESDI was replaced with a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) after the Cologne and Helsinki summits in June and December 1999

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[13]'Summit Leaders Put Euro Before Defence', *The Times*, 22 October 1998.

[14]The EPC was introduced in 1970 and formalised by the Single European Act of 1987 as a foreign policy coordination and consultation mechanism between the member states.

[15]For policies, decision-making process and principal objectives of the CFSP see, Article J.1, *Treaty on European Union*, 7 February 1992.

[16]*Communiqué issued by the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council*, Brussels, 2 December 1993.

[17]*Declaration of the Heads of State and Government*, Issued by the North Atlantic Council, Brussels, 10-11 January 1994.

respectively.

In the meantime, Turkey was concerned with developments which might increasingly isolate Ankara from the European flank of NATO as it would be excluded from the central decision making and planning process if the WEU duplicated or even weakened NATO. Moreover, the possibility of the merger of the WEU and the EU in the future further caused concerns in Turkey that it would be isolated from all of Brussels's defence-related decisions.

As one senior Turkish diplomat put it: 'rhetoric by some European leaders about strengthening NATO and the transatlantic link was far from convincing. In reality the ESDI project on the table aims to transfer many of the features of NATO over to the EU'[19]. While Onur Oymen, Turkey's permanent representative at NATO, claimed 'it is wrong to think that Turkey could play the role of a subcontractor in regional conflicts, involved only in day-to-day operations, where the main decisions will be made by other European allies.'[20] Thus, the essential point was that, as a senior Turkish diplomat, in charge of the security affairs at the foreign ministry noted: Turkey was not against the ESDI's progress, but desired to be represented fully in that decision making process.[21] Turkey was also concerned that it would have no say in the decisions if for example, the EU intervened militarily in the areas such as the Balkans.[22] As president Ozal acknowledged, Turkey supported the evolution of a stronger European dimension on the

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[18]*Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council,* Berlin, 3 June 1996.

[19]Yuksel Soylemez, http://www.foreignpolicy.org.tr/eng/articles/ysoylemez_200301.htm

[20]Onur Oymen, 'The Turkish Perspective on ESDI', on The European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI), The Institute of Turkish Studies, Washington, May 2000. For similar views see: Erol Manisali, 'Avrupa Kendi Ordusunu Kurarken Turkiye Dislaniyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 28 April 1999; Muharrem Karsli, 'TC-AB-BAB-ABD-NATO', *Milliyet,* 16 December 1996; Aslan Gunduz, 'AB Yolunda NATO Vetosu', *Aksiyon,* 1-7 March 1997; Turkish defence minister H. Sami Turk's speech, *NATO's Evolution in the 21st Century and Turkey,* Washington, 26 April 1999, Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

[21]Interview with Tomur Bayer, *Turkiye,* 26 December 1999; Hasan Unal, 'Avrupa Savunma ve Guvenlik Girisimi', *Zaman,* 29 April 1999

[22]Esra Cayhan, 'Towards the ESDP: With or without Turkey', *Turkish Studies,* vol. 4, no. 1, (Spring 2003), pp. 45-52.

condition that such a development reinforced the Atlantic Alliance.[23] This was further emphasised by the Turkish premier Ciller who stated: 'in the military field in particular, it has been and remains hard to conceive of any circumstances in which Europe would be better off without American participation.'[24]

The US has also supported Turkey's full membership in the WEU declaring that the new military formation should include Turkey. Washington also expressed its concern over the EU's search for a strong defence component arguing that this could undermine the unity of NATO.[25] As one state department official noted 'the last thing Washington wanted to see was a European defence identity which begins within NATO but grows out of NATO and then away from NATO.'[26] By 1998, France, which had been distancing itself for some time from NATO's military structure on the grounds that the Europeans were not being offered a sufficiently important role in the Alliance, became an ardent supporter of reactivating and merging the WEU with the EU as the Union's 'military arm'. But, other members such as Italy, Britain and the Netherlands argued that the WEU should become a European security pillar within the Atlantic Alliance rather than duplicate it.[27] Following Britain's decision to drop its long-standing objections to a EU defence capability, an Anglo-French defence initiative was put forward at the end of 1998 calling on 'credible military forces' which foresaw the EU operating in an autonomous manner in international crises[28], and during NATO's Washington Summit in April 1999, the 11 EU NATO members pressed the Alliance to recognise the Union's right to order

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[23]*President Turgut Ozal's Address to the WEU Parliamentary Assembly*, Paris, 5 May 1991.

[24]Tansu Ciller, 'Turkey and NATO: Stability in the Vortex of Change', *NATO Review*, vol. 42, no. 2, (April 1994), pp. 3-7. Also See, Seyfi Tashan, 'Turkiye'nin Stratejik Konumu ve Sorunlar', *Zaman*, 3 March 1998.

[25]*Aksam*, 2 December 1999.

[26]'Europe Warned not to Weaken Nato', *The Independent*, 8 October 1999; 'Wary US Watches as Chirac and Blair Forge New European Defence Pact', *The Independent*, 25 November 1999.

[27]Tom Lansford, 'The Triumph of Transatlanticism: NATO and the Evolution of European Security after the Cold War', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 22, no. 1, (March 1999), pp. 1-28, especially, pp. 9-16.

[28]'Britain to Back Defence Role for Europe', *The Times*, 21 October 1998; 'Britain and France Sign up to Defend Europe', *The Times*, 5 December 1998.

military operations using NATO's assets and capabilities when the US chose not to get involved.[29]

This further increased Turkey's suspicions and it strongly objected to this demand.[30] Turkey managed to postpone the EU proposal with agreement only that the ESDI would seek consensus in NATO on a 'case-by-case' basis.[31] However, though it was agreed at the Washington Summit that there would be the fullest possible involvement of non-EU European allies in EU-led crisis response operations, this was ignored at both EU's June 1999 Cologne and December 1999 Helsinki summits and no reference was made to the 'strategic concept' which would seek the consent of the Alliance members, on a case-by-case basis, to use NATO assets and capabilities.[32] The Turkish foreign ministry issued a statement following the Helsinki meeting expressing its dissatisfaction with the decision to exclude it from the establishment process of a 60,000 European Rapid Reaction Force due to become operational by 2003.[33]

Turkey: asset or burden

The WEU's decision to reject Turkey's full membership application and to sideline it from ESDI developments was perceived as a clear sign of the fact that in the absence of an immediate Soviet threat, Europe was not keen to shoulder responsibility or risk itself on Turkey's behalf. Europe at this time was pre-occupied by challenges including rising migration, illegal immigration, environmental issues, economic crisis, minority problems, ethnic strife and drug trafficking. As then Czech president Vaclav Havel told the NATO Council in 1991:

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[29]*Reuters*, 20 April 1999.

[30]'NATO'da Turkiye-AB Cekismesi', *Hurriyet*, 22 April 1999.

[31]*The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, Article 30, Washington, 23-24 April 1999; 'Turkey Escapes From-Last Minute Isolation', *Briefing*, no. 1240, 3 May 1999, pp. 18-9; Sukru Elekdag, 'NATO, ABD, AB ve Turkiye', *Milliyet*, 26 April 1999.

[32]*Washington Summit Communiqué*, Washington, 24 April 1999, paragraph 9-d; *Cologne European Council:Presidency Conclusions*, 4 June 1999; *Helsinki European Council: Presidency Conclusions*, 11 December 1999.

[33]*Turkish Daily News*, 16 December 1999.

> At the time when the totalitarian system in Central and Eastern Europe fell and democracy prevailed everything appeared to us to be clear and simple. But in reality the building of democratic systems and transition to market economies were much more painful than expected, and Central and Eastern European countries are now facing the threat of political and social unrest, material privations, criminal activities, increasingly intense feelings of hopelessness in society and the danger of populism-nationalism, xenophobia and national intolerance.[34]

In addition to its preoccupation with the above issues, Europe viewed Turkey increasingly as a burden.[35] In this context, though the unstinting support given by Ankara to the Western coalition against Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War was praised, it did little to influence Brussels to include Turkey in a European security system.[36]

Moreover, while the Gulf War became a test case for Turkey to prove its value to the European members of NATO, it also highlighted the ambivalent attitude of some of these states to Turkish security issues. While the Dutch sent units of modern Patriot ground-to-air missiles, some other allies were rather reluctant to express their full support and hardly made any moves to defend Turkey from a possible Iraqi attack. Belgium, Germany and Italy sent a number of completely outdated and lightly armed warplanes that had already been marked for retirement.[37] Furthermore, German officials stated that an Iraqi attack on Turkey would not be considered as an attack upon NATO and would, therefore, not require a NATO response under the Washington Treaty, which prompted president Ozal to accuse Germany of being an 'unreliable' ally.[38] By the same token, Turkey

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[34]'President Havel's Address to the NATO Council', *NATO Review*, vol. 39, no. 2, (April 1991), pp. 31-5.

[35]Ali Karaosmanoglu, *Cumhuriyet*, 7 February 1992; F. Stephen Larrabee, 'US and European Policy toward Turkey and the Caspian Basin' in *Allies Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1998), p. 144; Vittorio Sanguineti, 'Turkey and the European Union: Dreaming West but Moving East', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 1, (Winter 1997), p. 16; Ian Lesser, 'Bridge or Barrier? Turkey and the West after the Cold War' in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, Graham Fuller (ed.), (Colorado: Westview, 1993), p. 107.

[36]The European Council declared 'the Turkish role in the present European political situation is of the greatest importance.' *Agence Europe*, 28 June 1992; Ian Lesser, 'Turkey and the West After the Gulf War', *The International Spectator*, vol. 27, no. 1, (January-March 1992), p. 35; Heinz Kramer and Friedemann Muller, 'Relations with Turkey and the Caspian Basin Countries' in *Allied Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, Robert D. Blackwill and Michael Sturmer (eds.), (Cambridge: CSIA Studies in International Security, 1997), p. 183.

[37]Erik J. Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, (London: L. B. Tauris, 1995), p. 318.

[38]Gunther Hellman, 'Absorbing Shocks and Mounting Checks: Germany and Alliance Burden Sharing in the Gulf War' in *Friends in Need: Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf War*, Andrew Bennett, Joseph

acknowledged that, in the absence of the East-West confrontation, its contentious relations with Syria, Iraq or Iran would not necessarily be NATO's primary concern.[39]

Indeed, as long as Turkey's security problems did not pose a direct threat to the European mainland, they were not a priority for Turkey's European allies.[40] For example, Eberhart Rhein, who headed the European Commission's Turkey desk at the time, remarked that EU countries did not perceive Iraq, Iran, Syria and Armenia as security risks[41], while Turkey and its European allies shared different views over Bosnia and Nagorno-Karabakh as well as Northern Iraq, Cyprus and the Aegean-related issues with Greece.[42] As such, Turkey appeared to be the only country responding to the plight of Azerbaijan, as it failed to persuade its allies to stop Armenia occupying one-fifth of the Azeri territories; while the allies were inactive against Serb atrocities against Bosnians during most of the Yugoslav crisis, and rejected the Turkey's proposal for military intervention and the end of the arms embargo on Bosnia.

Apparently, Northern Europe also viewed Turkey's problems with Iraq and Syria as part of a strategic equation in the Middle East which had little to do with European security.[43] Likewise, Russian initiatives to modify the CFE in Caucasia and to deploy more Russian 'peace keeping' troops at the expense of Turkey and the newly-independent republics as part of its effort to legitimise its presence in Transcaucasia did not cause

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Lepgold and Danny Unger (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 177-8; Patrick M. Cronin, 'Perspectives on Policy and Strategy', *Strategic Review*, vol. 23, no. 4, (Fall 1995), p. 69.

[39]Interview with Hikmet Ozdemir, Hidir Goktas and Metin Gulbay, *Soguk Savastan Sicak Barisa: Yeni Dunya Duzeni ve Turkiye*, (Istanbul: Alan, 1994), pp. 176-7.

[40]Ozlem Eraydin, 'Avrupa'nin Yeni Guvenlik Duzeni ve Turkiye' in *Degisen Dunya ve Turkiye*, Faruk Sonmezoglu (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1996), pp. 35-6; O. Metin Ozturk, '1997 Yilina Girerken Savunma ve Guvenlige Ilskin Bir Durum Degerlendirmesi', *Yeni Forum*, vol. 18, no. 333, (February 1997), p. 35.

[41]Cited in Nazlan Ertan, 'No Good News on the Western Front', *Turkish Probe*, 2 May 1999, no. 329.

[42]Erol Manisali, 'ABD, AB ve Rusya'nin Soguk Savas Sonrasinda Bolgesel politikalari ve Kibris' in *Balkanlar, Kafkasya ve Ortadogu'da Gelismeler ve Turkiye*, Erol Manisali (ed.), (Istanbul: Kibris Arastirmalari Vakfi, 1994), p. 10.

[43]Gulnur Aybet, *NATO's Developing Role in Collective Security*, (Ankara: SAM, 1999); Larrabee, *op.cit.*, p. 161.

much concern among Turkey's European allies.[44] According to Kamran Inan, a long-time minister and a diplomat, while Central and Eastern Europe was well integrated into Europe through economic and military mechanisms, the Turkic republics were left to fend for themselves against Russia.[45] Nor did Turkey's strategic partnership with Israel generate any great support in Europe on the grounds that this move might further complicate matters in the Middle East. The Greek foreign minister called the Turkish-Israeli relationship as 'an alliance of wrongdoers' and 'a threat to the security of the region.'[46]

Critically, the Turkish political leadership and the wider public also increasingly came to sense that in some way its allies were becoming receptive to PKK's efforts to gain a political foothold throughout Europe.[47] For example, Ozdem Sanberk, Turkey's ambassador to London, argued that 'our educated class was raised to assume that its destiny was in Europe, but now sees prominent European politicians linking hands with groups whose aim is to overthrow our state or even aspire to partition it.'[48] While, Dogan Gures, the former army chief of staff, accused some European states, including Germany, France, Belgium and Sweden, of harbouring the PKK.[49] Moreover, the Kurdish question, particularly the PKK issue, became one of the main impediments to Turkish integration into Europe. Turkey's tense relations with its European allies in this matter grew as Kurdish organisations, which had close links with the PKK, found refuge in several

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[44]Sadi Erguvenc, 'Ortak Bir Avrupa Savunmasina Dogru', *Dis Politika,* vol. 6, no. 1, (April 1995), pp. 23-9.
[45]Kamran Inan, ''Dis Politika', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), p. 97.
[46]Efraim Inbar, 'Regional Implications of the Israeli-Turkish Strategic Partnership', *MERIA,* vol. 5, no. 2, (June 2001); *Turkish Daily News*, 6 March 1998.
[47]Erol Manisali, 'Kuzey Irak'ta Tehlikeli Oyun', *Cumhuriyet,* 16 October 1992; Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States*, (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p. 208.
[48]Cited in Carl Cavanagah, 'Turkey and the Pale Light of European Democracy', *Mediterranean Politics,* vol. 4, no. 3 (Autumn 1999), p. 65.
[49]'Gures: Teroru Amerika'da Destekliyor', *Gozcu,* 4 November 1996.

European countries, such as Germany, and organised Kurdish refugee groups in Europe.[50] Baki Ilkin, the Turkish ambassador to Washington expressed Turkey's discomfort over this dewvelopment, 'I should underscore the importance of remaining vigilant against extensions and front organizations of the PKK, which operate under cultural and political guises in Europe and even in this country (the US).'[51]

In this context, the first international Kurdish conference was organised in Paris in 1989 chaired by the French president Mitterand's wife[52]; the Netherlands agreed to host a Kurdish Parliament- in-exile, which was known to have links with the PKK[53]; Denmark allowed the ERNK, the political wing of the PKK, to open an office in Copenhagen[54] and Britain granted a licence to the PKK-supported TV station, MED TV, broadcasting to Turkey since 1995. Moreover, Germany imposed an arms embargo on Ankara arguing that Turkey used German arms against its own civilian Kurdish population in 1992 and further halted its military aid to Turkey in 1995 due to Turkish operations against the PKK.[55] The European Parliament demanded that all EU aid to Turkey earmarked to help Ankara set up a customs union with the EU be frozen immediately with the exception of those funds intended for projects to further promote democracy and respect for human rights.[56] Finally, prior to the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan's capture in Kenya in 1999, Rome allowed him refuge and rejected Turkey's demand for extradition. While, as will be

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[50]For the PKK's activities in Europe see, Nihat Ali Ozcan, *PKK: Tarihi, Ideolojisi ve Yontemi,* (Ankara: ASAM, 1999), pp. 288-316; Emin Gurses, *Ayrilikci Terorun Anatomisi/IRA-ETA-PKK,* (Istanbul: Baglam 1997), p. 82; Ismail Cem, *Turkey in the New Century,* Second edition, (Nicosia: Rustem , 2001), p. 115; Ali Karaosmanoglu, 'Turkiye Bakimindan Avrupa Guvenlik Kimligi: Jeopolitik ve Demokratik Ufuk', *Liberal Dusunce,* vol. 4, no.3, (Winter 1999); Heinz Kramer, 'The Institutional Framework of German-Turkish Relations', conference on *The Parameters of Partnership: Germany, the US and Turkey: Challenges for German and American Foreign Policy,* Washington, American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, 24 October 1997; Ismail Besikci, '*PKK Uzerine Dusunceler: Ozgurlugun Bedeli,* (Istanbul: Melsa, 1992), pp. 96-8.

[51]Baki Ilkin, speech delivered at the Washington Institute For Near East Policy, 2 September 1998.

[52]'Madama Mitterand and the Kurds', *Newspot,* 2 November 1989.

[53]*Turkish Daily News*, 13 April 1995.

[54]*Turkish Daily News*, 27 April 1995.

[55]'Almanya ile Kurt Kavgasi', *Cumhuriyet,* 27 March 1992 and *The New York Times,* 28 March 1995

[56]*Milliyet*, 20 September 1996.

discussed later, Greece extended support to the PKK from the very beginning of the Kurdish separatist operations.

2.2. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE): The answer to Turkish security issues?

Despite NATO's unrivalled prominence and crucial role in Turkey's security structure, its new geo-strategic environment drove Ankara to seek an alternative regional mechanism which would provide it the opportunity to put forward its own agenda.[57] The 1990 Charter of Paris re-defined and institutionalised the Conference on Co-operation and Security in Europe (CSCE) for the new international environment in 1994 and its name was changed to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).[58] Thus, the OSCE became even more important to Turkey due to the view that the post-Cold War order would be shaped by two important principles: the rule of law and collective security.[59] Ankara viewed the OSCE as a collective security regime that would deal with crises of the post-Cold War era such as Bosnia and Azeri-Armenian wars.[60] Turkey also asked for the backing of the OSCE countries in its fight against PKK terrorism within the context of collective action against terrorism, organized crime, arms and drug trafficking.[61]

Although Turkey attached great importance to the OSCE, two major deficiencies prevailed in the process of its development into a viable collective security regime during the period under discussion. The first was the lack of will. As will be discussed later,

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[57]For example, following the Paris Summit of 1990, Turkey played an important role in bringing the Turkic republics into the organisation with the belief that the membership would help to consolidate their independence and facilitate their integration into the Western world.

[58]For the activities and institutions of OSCE see, *OSCE*, (Vienna: Secretariat of the OSCE, 1996), pp. 5-8; Niels Helveg Petersen, 'Towards a European Security Model for the 21st Century', *NATO Review*, vol. 45, no. 6, (November-December 1997), pp. 4-7; *Annual Report 1996 on OSCE Activities*, (Vienna: Secretariat of the OSCE, January 1997), pp. 8-10.

[59]Trevor C. Salmon, 'The Nature of International Security' in *International Security in the Modern World*, Roger Carey and Trevor C. Salmon (eds.), (New York: St Martin Press, 1996).

[60]*Prime Minister Demirel's Press Conference*, 28 March 1992; 'Prime Minister Demirel Receives Armenian Delegation', *Newspot*, 18 June 1992.

[61]'Demirel'den Teror Uyarisi', *Milliyet*, 3 December 1996.

despite Turkey's desire for the organisation to deal with the crises of Bosnia and Nagorno-Karabakh, the OSCE's response was weak. Turkish foreign minister Cetin argued that 'the CSCE has not lived up to expectations in these crises.'[62] Prime minister Ciller also criticised the organisation for showing a lack of political will during a CSCE meetings: 'The success of institutions or organisations depends on the political will the member countries can generate, but that unfortunately this political will and determination was not being shown in connection with Bosnia and Karabakh.'[63] One important weaknesses of the organisation was that all decisions were taken by consensus and for this reason its large membership (with fifty-five countries) made it difficult to reach such consensus.[64] In this sense, as noted by Criss 'the OSCE remains a mere instrument of good-will.'[65]

The second deficiency of the organisation, perhaps a more serious one, was that decisions were not legally binding and as a result several member states ignored OSCE agreements and decisions. One clear example of this was the Russian military operations in Chechnya, which was viewed as a clear violation of the OSCE Code of Conduct.[66]

2.3. A transformed NATO: Turkey's crucial link with Europe

It can be argued that given Turkey's new security challenges in the post-Cold War era, it needed an even stronger NATO security umbrella. Following the abolition of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in early 1991, and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Central and Eastern European countries, in July 1990 the London Declaration of the North Atlantic Alliance stated that it no longer regarded the members of the Warsaw Pact as

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[62]TRT Radio (Ankara), *SWB*, EE/1859, 30 November 1993.

[63]'CSCE Summit', *Newspot*, 16 December 1994.

[64]See Turkish deputy prime minister Erdal Inonu's statement. 'Inonu: AGIK Yavas Calisiyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 3 August 1992.

[65]Criss, *op.cit.*, p. 201.

[66]Eric Mlyn, 'The OSCE, the United States and European Security', *European Security*, vol. 5, no. 3, (Autumn 1996), p. 441; Adrian Hyde-Price, 'Future Security Systems for Europe' in *Security and Strategy in the New Europe*, Colin McInnes (ed.), (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 52; Dean Jonathan, 'New Components of the European Security System: The Roles of CFE, NATO, EC, and the CSCE' in *The Future of European Security: The Pursuit of Peace in an Era of Revolutionary Change*, J. Philip Rogers (ed.), (London: Macmillan, 1993), p. 120. V. Y. Ghebali, 'Soguk Savas Sonrasi Avrupa'sinda

adversaries.[67] In response, there were two clashing views over NATO's future. One group argued that NATO was the most successful security organisation in modern history and was still the sole guarantor at the centre of European defence. The other group argued that in the absence of a clear and imminent threat to the West, NATO was no longer relevant to Europe's changing security environment.[68] In any event, NATO, as a victorious institution of the Cold War era, was bound to redefine itself to justify its continuing role in the new European security architecture, and following the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact, NATO tried to adapt its new policies and objectives to the changes taking place in Europe.[69] It also established close links with the Central and Eastern European countries as well as with the CIS members, notably Russia, despite early fears that the two would never cooperate.[70]

Turkey was relieved, to some extent, to see a more powerful NATO attempting to deal

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AGIK', *NATO Dergisi*, no. 2, (1991), p. 15.

[67]*London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance*, Issued by the North Atlantic Council, London, 5-6 July 1990, pp. 3-4.

[68]For the arguments see, Adrian Hyde-Price, 'Alternative Security Systems for Europe' in *European Security-Towards 2000*, Michael C. Pugh (ed.), (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 126-8; Lawrence Freedman and Beatrice Heuser, 'NATO in Transformation: Toward a Pan-European Security Mechanism?' in *European Dilemmas After Maastricht*, Beverly Crawford and Peter W. Schulze (eds.), (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), p.259; James McCarthy, 'Strengthening Security in Central and Eastern Europe: New Opportunities for NATO' in *European Security Toward the Year 2000*, (Washington: National Defense University, 1993), p. 123; David G. Haglund, S. Neil MacFarlane, and Joel J. Sokolsky, 'NATO and the Quest for Ongoing Viability' in *NATO's Eastern Dilemmas*, David G Haglund, S. Neil MacFarlane and Joel J. Sokolsky (eds.), (Colorado: Westview Press), p. 21.

[69]The successive summits, such as the London Summit of 1990, the Rome Summit of 1991 and the Washington Summit of 1999 have opened new chapters in the history of the Alliance and have set out the road map by which NATO would evolve in the future. The Alliance accepted a new 'Strategic Concept' aimed at bringing its overall strategy into line with future needs and providing for new missions for the Alliance in conflict resolution and regional security. See, *The Alliance's New Strategic Concept*, Rome, 7-8 November 1991. *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, Washington, 23-24 April 1999.

[70]The North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) (replaced by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, EAPC, in 1997) was established in 1991 to o co-ordinate the future development of this partnership with Central and Eastern European countries along with the CIS members. The EAPC with its 44 members provides an overarching framework for political and security-related consultations and enhanced co-operation. See, *Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council*, Sintra, 29 May 1997. In 1994, NATO also introduced Partnership for Peace (PfP) for the NACC and other members of the OSCE for political and military co-operation throughout Europe. See, *Partnership for Peace: Invitation*, The North Atlantic Council, Brussels, 10-11 January 1994; Joseph Kruzel, 'Partnership for Peace and the Transformation of North Atlantic Security' in *NATO in the Post-Cold War Era: Does it Have a Future*, S. Victor and Marry Ann Heiss (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 339-45

with new conflicts in the Balkans, Caucasia and the Middle East.[71] Turkey welcomed the use of NATO forces for peacekeeping purposes such as in Bosnia, though it argued that the organisation should be able to intervene in these regions as a peace making body as well.[72] As early as 1992, Turkey asked for a NATO force to be deployed in Karabakh when a cease-fire was achieved and repeatedly urged NATO to intervene in the war in Bosnia.[73] Ankara also asked for a division size NATO force, to be deployed either in the eastern or the southern part of Turkey to help fight the PKK on the grounds that the Alliance regarded state supported terrorism as a threat.[74]

From the Turkish perspective, as will be discussed in the coming chapters, the wars in the Balkans demonstrated the inability of the regional and non-regional organisations other than NATO to contain the new conflicts. In essence therefore, the successful NATO operations during the Bosnia and Kosovo crises, the first 'out-of-area' and ground force operations in its history, served to show that there was no practical alternative to NATO under American leadership.[75] NATO's involvement also showed that Europe, without transatlantic involvement, could not restore and maintain peace on the continent alone. As an internal report presented to the WEU Assembly stated, 'despite its efforts for four years to establish and conduct a common security policy, Europe has not been able to bring about peace in the former Yugoslavia without military and diplomatic intervention and military support from the US.'[76] For Turkey, therefore, a US-led NATO, as Turkish

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[71]'Turkiye Artik NATO'nun Cephe Ulkesi', *Cumhuriyet,* 12 May 1992; Sadi Erguvenc, 'Turkey in the New European Security Context: Turkey's Role and Expectations in the Transatlantic Partnership', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 11, no. 1-2, (1997), p. 22; Oya A. Mughisuddin, 'Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Ortadogu Ekseninde Turk Dis Politikasi: Etkenler ve Tercihler', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 2, no. 9, (May-June 1996), pp. 255-62.

[72]'Ankara NATO'nun Yeni Rolunu Yetersiz Buluyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 7 June 1992.

[73]'Cetin: Karabaga NATO Gucu Gonderilsin', *Cumhuriyet,* 12 March 1992; 'Defence Minister Ayaz: NATO should immediately Intervene in Bosnia-Herzegovina', *Newspot,* 22 October 1992.

[74]'Guneydogu'ya NATO Tumeni', *Cumhuriyet,* 5 February 1992.

[75]Arthur Cyr, 'Turkey and the West', *Perceptions,* vol. 1, no. 3, (September-November 1996), p. 115. For NATO's role in Kosovo and Bosnia see, *The Reader's Guide to the Washington Summit in Washington,* (NATO: Brussels, 1999), pp. 37, 44.

[76]*Organising Security in Europe-Defence Aspects,* Document no: 1510, 8 February 1996, Assembly of

president Demirel noted in 1999, was the most important forum for protecting the values of the civilized world in the next century.[77]

NATO expansion

Despite some differences with the Alliance over NATO's dual process of adaptation and enlargement, for Turkey NATO provided the main multilateral link for achieving its security needs and addressing old and new regional challenges. Russia objected to NATO's eastward enlargement to include former Warsaw Bloc countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.[78] Turkey was concerned that given Russia's regional role in the ex-Soviet republics, Moscow's position should be taken into consideration since the negative developments could strengthen the hands of anti-Western nationalists in Russia who viewed Turkey as a rival.[79] There was also the fear that Russia might even be pushed to move into Eurasia or 'near abroad' in order to consolidate its influence at the expense of the newly-independent regional countries of Caucasia and Central Asia, where Turkey had strategic interests.[80] Thus, Ankara reiterated its support for Russia in view of the proposed NATO expansion, and argued that Europe's security framework could not be constructed without Russia.[81]

Turkey was also concerned by the possibility that NATO expansion might be linked to

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Western European Union, Paris, p. 2.

[77]Sedat Ergin, 'Demirel ve Kosova Krizi', *Hurriyet,* 13 April 1999.

[78]Paul Flenly, 'Russia in the New Europe' in *Europe: The Cold Divide,* Fergus Carr (ed.), (London and Hampshire: Macmillan, 1998), p. 107. This was most evidenced following the success of ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky in the Russian elections of 1993. He threatened that if the Eastern European countries were to join NATO, this could possibly lead to the outbreak of a third world war. *Cumhuriyet,* 11 January 1994. For the arguments on NATO's enlargement see, Christoph Bertram, 'Why NATO Must Enlarge', *NATO Review,* vol. 45, no. 2, (March 1997), pp. 14-5; Boleslaw A. Boczek, 'NATO and the Former Warsaw Pact Countries' in *NATO in the Post-Cold War Era: Does it Have a Future,* S. Victor and Marry Ann Heiss (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 218-23. Also see the statement of the Russian ambassador to London. *The Daily Telegraph,* 19 May 1997.

[79]For example, despite various assurances and compromises Russia stood suspicious and considered NATO's decision to expand towards Eastern Europe during the Madrid Summit of 1997 as a 'big mistake'. Oya Akgonenc, 'Madrid Zirvesi'nin Dusundurdukleri', *Yeni Ufuk,* 14 July 1997; Nursin A. Guney, 'Soguk Savasin Ardindan Avrupa'da Yeni Guvenlik Arayislari; NATO'nun Sorunlari' in *Avrupa'da Yeni Guvenlik Arayislari NATO-AB-Turkiye,* Nursin A. Guney and Esra Cayhan, (Istanbul: AFA, 1996), p. 71.

[80]Mim Kemal Oke, 'NATO ve Turkiye', *Turkiye,* 24 April 1997.

the Treaty of Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) of 1990, which proposed significant reductions in conventional arms and equipment. Indeed, in 1995, the Russian defence minister threatened that Russia would not fulfil CFE treaty obligations if NATO expanded into Eastern Europe. This was followed by the creation of the 58th Army in the Northern Caucasus to 'maintain stability and tranquillity' in the region.[82] At this point, it emerged that NATO was considering concessions that would allow Moscow to deploy a heavier military presence in the Caucasus region than set out in the treaty in return for Russia's consent over expansion.[83] In fact, to Ankara's disappointment, Russia was permitted higher force levels in the original areas of the flank zone and with an extension from 1995 to 1999 to comply with the treaty obligations during the first CFE Review Conference in 1996.[84] Ankara feared that this might jeopardise the existing military balance at the expense of Turkey and undermine the independence of the Caucasian republics.[85] As the Turkish deputy chief of staff Cevik Bir noted the fear that, 'within the context of the CFE negotiations, a green light is practically given to prior adversaries to deploy more forces in Caucasus in exchange for certain concessions in Central Europe. By doing so, the risks for Turkey are compounded and the newly-independent states are left under political and military pressure.'[86]

Another issue was the direction of NATO's expansion. By 1996, debates on NATO's expansion gained momentum particularly when it was backed with great enthusiasm by then the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright who noted that 'the new NATO could

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[81] *Hurriyet*, 12 December 1996; *Cumhuriyet*, 25 February 1997.

[82] Douglas L. Clarke, 'Russia and the CFE Treaty', *Post Soviet Prospects*, vol. 3, no. 6, (June 1995); 'Conventional Forces in Europe: Outflanked', *The Economist*, 8 June 1996, p. 44.

[83] See, 'Upheaval in Transcaucaus and Turkey: A new centre of challenges and opportunities for Turkey' *Chapter Nine.*

[84] According to Dean, one reason for this, was to have a free hand to move ahead with NATO enlargement in 1997. Jonathan Dean, 'Future of the CFE Treaty', *Occasional Papers on International Security Policy*, no. 17 (May 1996); Jeffrey D. McCausland, 'NATO and Russian Approaches to Adapting the CFE Treaty', *Arms Control Today*, (August 1997).

[85] Erhan Yarar, 'NATO'ye Evet Ama, Genislemeye "Tereddutsuz Evet'e" Hayir', *Yeni Yuzyil*, 27 May 1997.

[86] *Strategic Forum*, no. 135, (February 1998), p. 4.

do for Europe's East what the old NATO did for Europe's West.'[87] On the issue of the countries to be invited to join, the US initially insisted that only Czechs, Hungarians and Poles should join NATO.[88] Germany and Britain agreed,[89] but Turkey supported membership of Balkan states including Romania, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Albania, where it had direct security concerns.[90] As such, Turkey strongly backed the French proposal for a 'southern enlargement' and this won considerable support from the Mediterranean members who sought to balance the 'eastern enlargement'.[91] Ankara was also concerned that NATO's eastern expansion would bring a greater burden on the southern flank countries such as Turkey as the Alliance would increasingly concentrate on the east.[92]

During the expansion debates, Turkey also argued that the growth of NATO and other European organisations needed to be considered together, with Turkish foreign minister Ciller argued that 'it must not be forgotten that NATO documents prescribe that the expansion of NATO, the EU and the WEU should proceed together in close relation.'[93] On this basis, Turkey also argued that it would be very difficult for the Turkish parliament to ratify NATO's decision for enlargement unless it received certain assurances that there would be some progress towards its EU membership application.'[94] However, Ankara later acknowledged that there was little hope that the European members of the Alliance would notice this on the grounds that these were two different issues to be handled separately. Ultimately, Ankara was not in a position to push its arguments strongly but to

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[87]*The Economist,* 15 February 1997; *The Independent,* 17 February 1997.

[88]John Lwis Gaddis, 'History, Grand Strategy and NATO Enlargement', *Survival,* vol. 40, no. 1, (Spring 1998), pp. 145-51.

[89]See, *International Herald Tribune,* 9 October 1996; *The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU,* (London: Conservative Political Center, 1994), p. 18.

[90]Interview with Sukru Sina Gurel, Turkish minister of state in charge of European affairs, *Turkiye,* 26 October 1997.

[91]*The Economist,* 7 June 1997.

[92]Ergun Balci, 'NATO'da Yeni Tartisma', *Cumhuriyet,* 17 June 1997.

[93]*Cumhuriyet,* 19 February 1997.

[94]See the statement of Kamran Inan, head of the foreign affairs commission in the assembly. 'Mansur Akgun, 'Bati ve Turkiye', *Yeni Yuzyil,* 10 June 1997; Ferhat Koc, 'Yeni NATO', *Milli Gazete',* 17 July 1997.

go along with the decision for expansion and did not seek to block the accession of the prospective entry of new members to NATO.[95] During the Madrid Summit of 1997 the Alliance invited the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to start accession talks and the three former Warsaw Pact members joined NATO in 1999 to coincide with the Alliance's 50th anniversary.[96]

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[95]*The Daily Telegraph*, 17 December 1997.

[96]*Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Co-operation*, Madrid, 8 July 1997; *Washington Summit Communiqué*, Washington, 24 April 1999.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ALIENATION OF TURKEY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

3.1. Turkey's prospects for full-membership of the European Union (EU): Obsession or reality?

In addition to Turkey's apparent exclusion from the establishment of the new European security structure, Ankara's marginaslisation in the context of 'the new Europe' was even more visible in relation to Turkish-EU relations. In addition to Brussels's rejection in 1989, the Union's Luxembourg Summit in 1997 left Turkey out of EU's biggest ever enlargement process following which Ankara even threatened to withdraw its membership application totally, as well as suspend political dialogue. On the other hand, the inclusion of other nations ahead of Turkey, who had far weaker economies than Turkey and who lacked experience of the free market economy and democracy further deepened the diasppointment and anger in Turkey. This sense of isolation, in addition to its domestic ramifications, resulted in Turkey seeking more diverse relations with other regions in an attempt to revitilise its already declining strategic value to Europe. The emergence of new foreign policy alternatives beyond its borders in the wake of the Cold War no doubt further influenced Turkish policy makers to re-evaluate the traditionally Western-oriented outlook. For example, as early as 1990, President Ozal pointed out other areas as new alternatives to Europe: the newly opened Central Asia region, the Balkans and the Muslim/Arab world.[1] The ever-increasing centrality of Washington to Turkish policies and the strategic partnership developed with Israel over the last decade should also be considered in this respect.

Turkey's Westernisation policy, which started with the *Tanzimat* period (Reformation of 1839) during the Ottoman era, gained a new dimension and added momentum with the emergence of modern Turkey in 1923. Ataturk believed that, as a pressing priority,

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[1]'Ozal'dan 6 Mesaj', *Cumhuriyet,* 17 July 1990. Also see, Sebahattin Zaim, 'Turkiye'nin Avrupa Toplulugu

Turkey's place should be among the most civilised nations of the world. According to him, civilization meant Europe and this goal could only be realised with a new civilisational project, which was nothing less than a 'change of civilisation': from East to West.[2] Since that time it had always been Turkey's position that integration fully into Europe was the ultimate realisation of its Westernisation policy, and particularly for Ataturkist secular elite, this has become a key matter of identity-almost an existential concern.[3] In this respect, in the eyes of Turkish officials, the EU provided Turkey a platform from which it could realise its long-lasting goal, as such the membership application made to the EEC in 1959 was viewed a decisive step.[4] Indeed, following the customs union agreement in 1995, the Turkish foreign minister Murat Karayalcin claimed in a speech before the Turkey-EU Association that 'Turkey regards the Customs Union Agreement as one of the main instruments of her economic and political modernisation process. We believe that this will anchor us to Europe in line with the basic orientations of our Republic.'[5] In this context, as noted by Seyfi Tashan, head of the Foreign Policy Institute in Ankara, even Turkey's lengthy representation in the Alliance was no match, 'NATO is our legal foot in the Western camp, but the EU is the real one.'[6] In sum, as noted by Ozal in his book, *Turkey in Europe and Europe in Turkey*, in the last forty years membership in the EU has become a fundamental foreign policy goal to be viewed as a matter of national interest.

> Turkey believes that in joining the EU she identifies her future with that of Europe. This is her fundamental purpose. At the cost of very great sacrifices Turkey has struggled for more than two centuries to establish a democratic way of life based on liberty and human rights. Since we share these ideals with Europe

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Meselesi' in *Avrupa Toplulugu'nun Cevabi ve Yeni Tercihler,* (Istanbul: TOBB, 1990), pp. 45-6.

[2]*Ataturk'un Soylev ve Demecleri,* (Istanbul: 1945), pp. 320-5; Nilufer Gole, '*Modern Mahrem, Medeniyet ve Ortunme,* Fifth edition, (Istanbul: Metis, 1994), pp. 48-76.

[3]Philip Robins, 'Turkey and Europe: Integration or Alienation?', *Policy Watch,* 4 August 1998.

[4]Udo Steinbach, 'The European Community, the United States, the Middle East, and Turkey' in *Turkey and the West,* Metin Heper (ed.), (Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), p. 112.

[5]*Turkiye-AT 36. Ortaklik Konseyi Toqlantisi,* (Istanbul: IKV, 1995).

[6]*The Economist*, 18 June 1988.

Turkey believes that she can defend them better with the help of Europe.[7]

In addition to this overriding aspect of Turkish-EU relationship there were several other factors underpinning the relationship. The EU appeared as a major economic world power and gained substantial influence in international affairs in the post-Soviet era. In line with its economic success, Brussels also sought ways to realise its historical goal of political integration in the future, which became more evident after its initiatives to form a common foreign and security policy among the member states. No doubt such a political initiative, without Turkey, as discussed earlier, would bring serious security implications for Ankara in the context of the European security system.[8] Political and security reasons aside, economic and trade relations alone made Turkish-EU ties exceptional and Turkey's immediate economic interests became primarily a sign of co-operation with the West. EU members were the most important trading partners of the Turkish economy, and EU markets were extremely significant for Turkey. For example, over the decade under discussion Turkey's trade volume with the EU accounted for half of Turkey's overall trade. As of 1999, the EU accounted for a 54 percent share of Turkey's total exports and 53 percent of its imports. These figures have been almost stable in the last twenty years (with the exception of the early years of 1980s which saw an improvement in trade with the Middle Eastern countries).[9] Turkey was about the sixth largest external trading partner of the EU and since 1996 has had a full customs union with it.[10] In addition, nearly 60 per

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[7]Turgut Ozal, *Turkey in Europe and Europe in Turkey*, (Nicogia: K. Rustem and Brother, 1921), pp. 340-1.

[8]The Greek factor was another important political reason in Turkey's bid for membership. In fact, one of the main reasons behind the Turkish application to the EEC in 1959 was that Ankara did not want to leave Greece alone within the community as bilateral relations of the two Aegean members started to deteriorate and entered a new phase of tension. Thus, it was Ankara's conviction that the differences in the Turco-Greek between would eventually become issues between Turkey and the EU unless Turkey represented in Brussels. Esat Cam, 'Avrupa Toplulugu ve Turkiye' in *Turk Dis Politikasinda Sorunlar,* Esat Cam (ed.), (Istanbul: Der, 1989), pp. 168-74; Tevfik Saracoglu, *Turkiye Avrupa Ekonomik Toplulugu Ortakligi: Anlasmalar,* (Istanbul: Ekonomi Yayinlari, 1992), p. 4.

[9]*Turkish Economy and EU-Turkey Relations,* TUSIAD, January 2000.

[10]For the Customs Union Agreement see, Mehmet Gonlubol and F. Hakan Bingun, '1990-1995 Donemi Turk Dis Politikasi' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi 1919-1945,* Ninth edition, (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), pp. 719-27; M. Ali Birand, *Turkiye'nin Gumruk Birligi Macerasi,* 1953-1996, (Istanbul: AD Yayincilik, 1996), pp. 448-50; Michael Cendrowicz, 'The European Community and Turkey: Looking Backwards,

cent of foreign investment was from EU countries.[11] Moreover, around three million Turks live in Europe and they transfer significant amounts of remittance to Turkey: estimated at US$3 billion annually.[12]

As Eric Rouleau, the former French ambassador to Ankara argues, given the origins and dynamics of Turkey's relationship with the Union, there is almost a national consensus that Turkey's future lied with Europe. According to one survey conducted in Istanbul in 1993, nearly half of the participants responded that Turkey should be part of the EU, more than double those who favoured integration with either the Muslim world or the Turkic world (22 and 20 percent, respectively).[13]

> Even when Turkish enthusiasm over prospects in Central Asia and the Middle East was at its height, Ankara never deviated from its long-standing and deep conviction that Turkey's future lies with Europe. Turkey's determination to become an integral part of Europe is the fruit of a national consensus that could seem strange in a Muslim country with nothing more than a geographical toehold in Europe.[14]

Apart from the existence of strong pro-Western bureaucracy, (most notably the foreign ministry), secularist Kemalist elite and the army, which has been viewed as the ultimate guardian of the Kemalist ideology, in the context of the decision-making process, political parties of both right and left wings have traditionally been supportive of Turkey's relations with the Union. As a matter of fact, since the time of Turkey's membership application to the EU in 1959, different political parties from each spectrum of Turkish political life, including military regimes, have become ardent supporters of improved

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Looking Forwards' in *Turkish Foreign Policy,* C. H. Dodd (ed.), (Cambridge: The Eotlen Press, 1992), p. 25; Esra Cayhan, 'Avrupa Birliginin Sorunlari' in *Avrupa'da Yeni Guvenlik Arayislari NATO-AB-Turkiye,* Esra Oayhan and Nursin A. Guney, (Istanbul: AFA, 1996), pp. 134-6.

[11]*Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1995,* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1997), p. 28; Yilmaz, *op.cit.,* p. 97.

[12]See, Faruk Sen, 'Turkish Communities in Western Europe' in *Turkey Between East and the West: New Challenges for a Rising regional Power,* Vojtech Mastny and R. Craig Nation (eds.), (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 233-64; Koray Duzgoren, 'Avrupa'daki Turkiye'nin Farkindamiyiz?', *Radikal,* 10 June 1997; Ismet Solak, 'Almanya'daki Turkiye', *Hurriyet,* 8 February 1999.

[13]Yilmaz Esmer, 'Turk Kamuoyu ve Avrupa' in *Turkiye Avrupa'nin Neresinde?,* Bulent Gokay (ed.), (Ankara: Ayrac, 1997), pp. 125-6.

[14]Eric Rouleau, 'The Challenges to Turkey', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 72, no. 5, (November-December 1993), p. 115.

relations with the EU. The only exceptions to this have been the religious and far-left parties, which are generally marginal and have never managed to be dominant in Turkish politics.[15] One reason for this high level of stability in the country's committed pro-Western orientation, according to Celik, was due to the fact that the military establishment had dominated foreign policy decision making.[16] To this end, the anti-Western Refah Party's relatively short stay in power (between June 1996 and July 1997) is a recent example of how Kemalist ideology remains a powerful force. Despite the growing fears among Turkey's western allies (as well as financial institutions and investors)[17] relations with the EU continued to grow.[18] Although Refah's Necmettin Erbakan threatened to cancel it before he came to power, nothing happened to the Customs Union Agreement. Eventually, Refah's tentative steps towards changing the orientation of the country's established foreign policy were highly constrained by the army and resulted in the government's removal, in what amounted to a 'soft' or 'post-modern' coup.

Notwithstanding this commitment shown by Turkey to integrate with Europe and the existence of vast economic and political interdependence, two important asymmetries within EU-Turkish relations severely affected better relations. The first was that Turkey placed far more importance on its relations with the EU than the EU did on its relations with Turkey.[19] Essentially, therefore, Brussels's continuous refusal to accept Turkey as a full member on economic and political grounds, despite the fact that Turkey, since the Ankara Agreement of 1963, had the oldest association relationship with the EU was the foremost factor behind the rapid deterioration in political relations. Secondly, as already

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[15]Pro-Islamist Refah Party (heir to the National Order and National Salvation Parties) and the communist the Workers Party of Turkey (TIP) in the 1970s became known with their anti-European policies. For a well-elaborated research on Turkish political parties' approach towards Turkey's membership application see, Esra Cayhan, *Dunden Bugune Turkiye- Avrupa Birligi Iliskileri ve Siyasal Partilerin Konuya Bakisi,* (Istanbul: Boyut, 1997).

[16]Yasemin Celik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Westport: Praeger, 1999), p. 152.

[17]*The Times,* 6 June 1996.

[18]See, Philip Robins, 'Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan', *Survival,* vol. 39, no. 2, (Summer 1997).

briefly noted, in the post-Cold War era Turkey and its European allies had differences and held diverse views on many regional issues: from the Kurdish problem to the Azeri-Armenian war, from the Cyprus question to the Bosnian crisis. This, however, further contributed to the disappointment and resentment with the EU. Additionally, the end of the Cold War not only helped to bring an added emphasis on the issues such as human rights, democratisation and the rule of law but also influenced Turkey's domestic scene. In this regard, the country's fundamental domestic problems were no longer solely internal matters. For example, the internationalised-Kurdish issue which had direct bearings on these issues had serious implications on Turkey's relationship with Europe.

Towards the Luxembourg shock

In 1989, the EU flatly rejected Turkey's membership application of 1987 whilst providing no timetable for full membership. The European Commission referred to Turkey's unsuitability for membership in political and economic terms.[20] The prospect for membership was further hampered as a consequence of the unprecedented developments in the European political map in the late 1980s when Central and Eastern European countries appeared as new and strong candidates for the EU club. Obviously, this significantly reduced Turkey's chance of membership. For example, as early as 1991, Fernard Braun, special adviser to Jacques Delors, the president of the EC Commission, said at a panel in Istanbul, 'if I tell you that the Community's doors are wide open for Turkey, I would not be honest'.[21] Shortly after Turkey's historic Customs Union Agreement with the EU[22], which made Turkey the first country to conclude a customs

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[19]Robins, 'Turkey', *op.cit.*

[20]*Commission Opinion on Turkey's Request for Accession to the Community,* Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 20 December 1989; John Redmond, *The Next Mediterranean Enlargement of the European Community: Turkey, Cyprus, and Malta?*, (Hants: Dartmouth Publishing, 1993), pp. 17-62.

[21]*Dateline Turkey,* 1 December 1990. A German diplomat claimed that given its political and cultural identity Turkish membership 'would dilute the EC's Europeanness'. *The Time,* 19 October 1992, p. 33.

[22]The customs Union put some additional burden on Turkish economy, though in the long-term it was envisaged that it would mainly benefit on the basis that a smooth economic integration of Turkey into the customs union would be realised. For the impacts of the customs union on Turkish economy see, Erol

union treaty without holding full-membership status, the EU's Luxembourg Summit in December 1997 decided the Union's biggest-ever expansion. The EU invited Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia as well as Cyprus into membership negotiations starting in March 1998 and promised that negotiations with five other states - Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania- could begin as soon as they were deemed ready. Meanwhile, Turkey managed to secure recognition for the first time of its 'eligibility for accession to the EU' without gaining 'candidate' status.[23]

For Turkey, the summit was a major disappointment -known as 'the Luxembourg shock'-and marked a new low in relations with Europe. In Ankara's view, as Sukru Gurel, the then foreign minister, put it Turkey's candidacy for full-membership was not judged by the same objective criteria applicable to the other candidates.[24] Furthermore, the inclusion of Cyprus in the first wave of applicant countries was perceived by Ankara as a clear sign that the EU simply did not take any notice of Turkish sensitivity over the issue and was taking sides with Greece or acting under the Greek influence.[25] Ankara feared that it now faced isolation and marginalisation. In the words of Ozdem Sanberk, a senior diplomat at Turkish foreign ministry and Ankara's ambassador to London: 'Europe is consciously leaving Turkey out of the patterns it is designing for its own future. The EU

Manisali, *Avrupa Birligine Alinmayan Turkiye'yi Gumruk Birliginde Bekleyen Sorunlar,* (Istanbul: Baglam, 1994); Deniz Vardar, 'Turkiye-Avrupa Toplulugu Iliskileri' in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi,* Faruk Soylemezoglu (ed.), (Istanbul: Der, 1994), p. 136; Mina Toksoz, 'The Economy: Achievements and Prospects' in *Turkish Transformation: New Century New Challenges,* Brian W. Beeley (ed.), (Huntingdon: The Eathon Press, 2002), pp. 145-7; *Turkish Economy-1996,* (Istanbul: MUSIAD, 1926), p. 56; *Cumhuriyet*, 30 September 1997; Nejdet Sevinc, 'Rakamlarla Gumruk Birligi', *Gunaydin,* 25 July 1997; Bahri Yilmaz, 'Turkey's New Role in International Politics', *Aussen Politik*, vol. 45, no. 1, (1994), p. 98.

[23] *The Independent*, 15 December 1997.

[24] Sukru S. Gurel, 'A General Appraisal of Current Turkish Foreign Policy' in *Turkey at the Threshold of the 21st Century: Global Encounters and/vs. Regional Alternatives,* Mustafa Aydin (ed.), (Ankara: International Relations Foundation, 1998), p. 11.

[25] Atila Eralp, 'Turkey and the European Union in the post-Cold War Era' in Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 182.

clearly has no plans to incorporate or absorb Turkey at present.'[26] The German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's statement at a 1997 meeting of Christian Democrats further helped to confirm this perception. 'As far as I am concerned Turkey can never join the EU' Kohl said.[27] As a result, political relations between Ankara and Brussels saw a rapid deterioration. The Turkish Foreign minister Ismail Cem described the decision as 'wrong and negative' declaring Turkey's decision to suspend political discussions with the EU unless it came forward with an acceptable formula, but to continue economic relations within the framework of the customs union.[28] The Turkish prime minister Mesut Yilmaz also affirmed later that Turkey would no longer discuss certain issues with the EU such as the dispute with Greece, human rights and the Cyprus question while bilateral discussions would carry on with Greece, Britain and America or with any other interested parties.'[29] Then he threatened to withdraw Turkey's membership application from the EU unless Brussels formally granted it 'candidate status' and included Turkey in the accession process by June 1998. Turkey also threatened to boycott goods from 12 EU countries (excluding France, Italy and the UK which were seen as sympathetic to the Turkish cause).[30]

The only positive development in this context came in 1999. The devastating earthquake in Turkey, which resulted in thousands of casualties, had a positive impact on Turkey's political relations with the EU. Meanwhile, the new German socialist government was more supportive than the previous Kohl government to Turkish

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[26]Ozdem Sanberk, *The Outlook for Relations between Turkey and the European Union after the Cardiff Summit,* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 20 July 1998.

[27]Also see German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel's statement, Stephen Kinzer, 'Europeans Shut the Door on Turkey's Membership in Union.' *New York Times,* 27 March 1997; Stephen Bates and Martin Walker, 'Bridge over Troubled Waters', *The Guardian,* 2 December 1998.

[28]*Hurriyet*, 13 December 1997.

[29]*The Daily Telegraph*, 15 December 1997.

[30]*The Daily Telegraph*, 18 December 1997; *Zaman,* 19 December 1997.

membership ambitions.[31] New Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder even stated 'Germany determinedly supports Turkey's efforts to be a full EU member.'[32] The earthquake also generated a significant rapprochement between Turkey and Greece and there was an exchange of rescue assistance and humanitarian aid. This was followed by a new political dialogue between the two neighbours as Athens became more co-operative in easing its long-standing objections towards Turkey's membership of the EU.[33]

In December 1999, Turkey was invited to become a candidate for membership.[34] Obviously this created enormous enthusiasm in many circles in the country that 'a 160-year old dream' was about to come true. 'Turkey's Westernisation vocation which started in 1839 with the *Tanzimat Fermani* finally came to a happy end in Helsinki' wrote Istanbul daily *Sabah.*[35] 'The meeting of the century: from knot to wedding', claimed *Milliyet*.[36] However, though the EU confirmed Turkey's candidacy, as explained by prime minister Jean-Claude Juncker of Luxembourg, the prospect of the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey remained unclear. 'Turkey has a place in the EU, but this will take decades.'[37] In fact, Turkey was the only country included in the enlargement process but was not given a pre-accession strategy.[38] As one study put it, even if Turkey started negotiations for membership by the second half of 2000, Commission officials believed that its accession negotiations may take at least ten to fifteen years.[39]

Was Europe asking too much?

During the Cold War years economic and security issues were the main focus of

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[31]Necati Zincirkiran, 'Almanya'nin Adayi: Turkiye', *Sabah,* 4 February 1999; Hasan Unal, 'Alman Disisleri Bakani'nin Ardindan', *Zaman,* 24 July 1999.

[32]*Aksam*, 2 September 1999.

[33]'FM: Greece to Play Active Role in Turkey EU Bid', *Athens News Agency,* 13 December 1999.

[34]*Milliyet*, 11-12 December 1999.

[35]'160 Yillik Ruya', 11 December 1999.

[36]'Asrin Bulusmasi: Dugumden Dugune', 11 December 1999.

[37]*New York Times,* 15 December 1997.

[38]Erkan Erdogdu, 'Turkey and Europe: Undivided but not United', *MERIA,* vol. 6, no. 2, (June 2002).

[39]Charles Grant, *EU 2010: An Optimistic Vision of the Future*, (London: CER, 2000), p. 14 and p. 49.

Turkey's relationship with Europe. As such, political and social aspects of the relationship including the arguments over Turkey's 'Europeanness' were to a large extent sidelined. In the post-Soviet era, however, this consideration was increasingly relevant as Europe began to redefine itself along historical and cultural lines. This process highlighted Turkey's 'distinctiveness'.[40] As Gulnur Aybet noted, 'not only the parameters of European security but also those of European culture were being redefined, as the division of Europe ceased to exist and Europe—east and west—was finding new grounds for bonding in historical, cultural, and religious terms.'[41] Indeed, the political requirements such as human rights and issues concerning Turkish democratic life as well as the Cyprus problem and relations with Greece increasingly became a perquisite in Turkey's membership negotiations with the EU; while economic issues began to slip into the background.[42]

However, against this background, it was apparent that Turkish authorities failed to notice the shift in community priorities. They continued to believe that the economic reforms they had been implementing since 1980 would satisfy the conditions for accession.[43] Accordingly, European demands for the adaptation of several democratic, social, cultural and economic reforms within the context of the 'Copenhagen criteria', which was established in 1993 and set the standards for democracy, the rule of law, human rights, the market economy, and the protection of 'minorities' for the prospective EU candidates, caused long lasting arguments. In Ankara's view, these criteria were never

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[40]F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Troubled Partnership: Turkey and Europe,* (RAND, 1998), p. 158.

[41]Gulnur Aybet, 'Turkey and European Institutions,' *The International Spectator*, vol. 34, no. 1 (January-March 1999), p. 107.

[42]'Turkiye'nin AT Uyeligine Simdi Kurt Engeli', *Cumhuriyet,* 29 March 1992. Sanberk, *op.cit.* This became most evident during the completion process of the customs union with the EU in 1995. The European Parliament asked for the improvement of its human rights record and several political reforms, which needed some constitutional amendments as a prerequisite for the approval of the agreement. At one point, the pressures put on Ankara went so far as to isolate Turkey from Europe altogether if Turkey refused to take the appropriate measures complying Europe's requests. *Newspot,* 10 February 1995; Ramazan Gozen, 'Two Process in Turkish Foreign Policy: Integration and Isolation', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 21, nos. 1-2, (1997), p. 118.

[43]Sevilay E. Kahraman, 'Rethinking Turkey-European Union Relations in the Light of Enlargement', *Turkish Studies* vol.1, no.1 (Spring 2000), p.5.

a subject of attention during the Cold War because, according to Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem, Turkey was performing a function vitally important to the West's security interests at the time.[44] In particular, demands for the implementation of certain reforms towards democratisation including widening political freedoms, abolition of the death penalty, the role of the state and the army in Turkish life, greater rights for 'minorities' or other ethnic groups, the easing of restrictions on broadcasting and education in ethnic languages other than Turkish was perceived in many circles especially among nationalist politicians, Kemalist leftist groups and the military establishment as the intervention of Turkey's internal affairs and hence incompatible with the existing system based on a theme of unification.

As such, as noted by Hasan Koni, professor of politics at Ankara University, European criticism over the closure of pro-Islamic and Kurdish parties were viewed by some as undue violations of Turkey's sovereignty.[45] While the calls to transfer power from the centre to the periphery, and from the state to social groups was viewed as a move towards political fragmentation.[46] This could in turn threaten territorial integrity and national unity, and therefore in a way the EU, like the PKK, was trying to divide Turkey.

For example, Devlet Bahceli, the leader of the ultra-Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and the senior coalition partner in the government (1999-2002), said that some of the main reforms requested by Brussels were in line with the objectives of the PKK.[47] Professor Umit Ozdag, the director of the highly influential Centre for Eurasian Strategic Research of Ankara (ASAM), asserted that the so called Copenhagen criteria put before Turkey as the precondition for accession in fact constituted nothing more than an attempt to establish

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[44]Ismail Cem, *Turkey in the New Century,* Second edition, (Nicosia: Rustem , 2001), pp. 33-4.

[45]Hasan Koni, speech given on *US-Turkish Relations in the Post Cold-War Era: The Ankara Perspective,* at Center for Strategic and International Studies, 12 September 2000.

[46]Ersel Aydinli and Ali R. Usul, 'Looking towards Europe', *The World Today,* vol. 58. no. 10, (October 2002), p. 10.

a legal and social framework to new ethnic and national groups.[48] Similarly, General Cumhur Asparuk, the secretary-general of the National Security Council, composed of political and military leaders, and considered as the top decision-making body of the Turkish establishment, said that it was out of the question to allow the broadcasting and education in Kurdish language arguing on the grounds that this might destroy the mosaic of the Turkish society, though Turkey later partially allowed the use of ethnic languages in broadcasting.[49] All in all, although it was generally agreed in Turkey that the country must do a great deal to come into line with European standards, in particular modernizing the economy, and overhauling the administrative system, the EU's negative stance vis-à-vis the Turkish membership and its indifference towards certain issues that concerned Turkey's security interests certainly contributed to the rise of nationalist anti-European views.[50] It was also argued that even if Turkey made the requested changes Europe would never accept it because the EU had a separate agenda, and essentially it was time for Ankara to follow 'honourable' foreign policies elsewhere.

Domestic implications of the tense relationship

Ultimately, the combination of these developments had a profound impact not only on Turkey's external relations but also on domestic politics. The implication of this process could be seen in the fact that the developments served to undermine pro-Western mainstream political parties in favour of extremist groups, and the ideological gap on the subject of the EU membership among different parts of the society such as secularists, Islamists, nationalists, leftists and so on seemed to be narrowing. The implication of weakening Turkish-EU political relationship, mostly owing to the EU's ongoing refusal to integrate Turkey, especially in the late 1980s and 1990s, and the conflicting views on

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[47]Semih Idiz 'Nationalist Challenge to Turkey's Reforms', *Financial Times,* 5 August 2002.

[48]Ümit Ozdag, 'Türkiye-Avrupa Birligi Iliskilerinin Jeopolitik Bir Incelemesi', *Stratejik Analiz,* (June 2002).

[49]Sahin Alpay, 'Ankara ve AB', *Milliyet,* 24 February 2000.

various regional issues could be seen to have affected Turkish public opinion and thus had implications for domestic politics to a large extent. According to one survey conducted in 1997, anti-European views among the Turkish public opinion have been on the rise.[51]

As a result, the whole state of affairs increasingly led Turkish governing circles to redefine the 'West' and the 'Westernisation project' and to question its strictly pro-western foreign policy.[52] In this political environment, rhetoric along the lines of 'we can do without Europe' or 'the world does not consist of Western Europe alone' found more and more space in the Turkish media.[53] What is more, as noted by Sami Kohen, columnist on foreign affairs for the Turkish daily *Milliyet*, there was a developing view in some Turkish intellectual circles that Turkey could be European without being in the EU (referring to Switzerland or most recently Norway which rejected membership in a referendum) and without severing economic ties.[54] For example, in 1997 deputy prime minister Ecevit, said that Turkey did not need to become an EU member to improve its economy, 'There are a number of other choices like the US, Canada, Japan, China, India and Russia'.[55] It was even suggested that with the establishment of economic and political entities among the newly-independent Turkic republics such as a 'commonwealth of Turkic republics' or a 'common market of the Turks', Turkey could not only respond to its exclusion from Europe but also become an independent 'regional superpower'.[56] Similarly, frustrated with Brussels' refusal to accept Turkey, general Tuncer Kilinc,

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[50]See, Ozdem Sanberk, *Key Features of Turkish Foreign Policy*, at The European Atlantic Group, London, 15 March 1999.

[51]*Sabah*, 21 November 1997.

[53]See, Atilla Eralp, 'Turkey and the EC in the Changing Post-War International System' in *Turkey and Europe*, C. Balkir and A. Williams (eds.), (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), pp. 41-2.

[53]See, Roundtable: 'Four Questions on Recent Turkish Politics and Foreign Policy', *MERIA*, vol. 2, no. 1, (March 1998); Ihsan D. Dagi, 'Batililasma "Arzusu" ve Dis Politikada Avrupa Krizi', *Yeni Yuzyil*, 25 July 1997.

[54]Sami Kohen, 'Turkey and Europe: Integration or Alienation?', *Policy Watch*, 4 August 1998.

[55]'Ecevit'ten Avrupa'ya Tarihi Uyari', *Hurriyet*, 19 August 1997.

[56]See, Oral Sander, 'Yeni Bir Bolgesel Guc Olarak Turkiye'nin Dis Politika Hedefleri' in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi*, Faruk Soylemezoglu (ed.), Second edition, (Istanbul: Der Yayinlari, 1998), p. 608.

secretary-general of the powerful National Security Council, openly urged a reconsideration of the country's efforts to join the Union and turn towards unconventional regional neighbours like Russia and Iran. 'Turkey has not seen the slightest assistance from the EU. The EU has a negative view on the problems that concern Turkey. I believe that the EU will never accept Turkey. Hence, Turkey needs new allies and it would be useful if Turkey engages in a search that would involve Russia and Iran.'[57]

These sentiments became most evident following the Luxembourg shock. The Turkish media was full of reactions not only from the public at large but also from leading policy makers. For example, one headline stated: 'go to hell Europe'[58] while a senior Turkish general expressed his disillusionment with Europe 'we would have been better off if we had spent the past 40 years as a communist dictatorship, rather than as a member of NATO'.[59] Additionally, developments strengthened the perception that 'the Union will never allow Turkey in -not on economic, political, or even strategic grounds, but on cultural and religious ones.'[60] In the words of Onur Oymen, the Turkish undersecretary of foreign affairs, 'Turkey feels that it is being judged by different criteria than other countries. It is concerned that the "Iron Curtain" that once divided Europe is being replaced by a "cultural/religious iron curtain."'[61] More and more people came to the conclusion that political reasons such as Aegean-related problems with Greece, the Kurdish and the Cyprus issues and the economic argument laid by the EU were simply excuses and not the real reasons behind the EU stance. 'Even if Turkey resolves them they will continue to say no. The acceptance of the Eastern European states in the next

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[57]'Kilinc: EU will Never Accept Turkey', *Turkish Daily News*, 8 March 2002. It was later claimed by the General Staff that this was his personal view.

[58]*Hurriyet,* 13 December 1997.

[59]*The Daily Telegraph*, 13 December 1997.

[60]*Strategic Survey 1998-1999,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for IISS, 1999), pp. 111-2.

[61]Onur Oymen, *Turkish Foreign Policy: Current Challenges*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 20 February 1997.

enlargement, though they experience similar problems, is the clear evidence.'[62] According to Turkish premier Yilmaz, Europe demanded one condition for membership: 'to change our religion.'[63] He later also accused European leaders of discriminating against Muslim Turkey, 'people who want to change the EU into a "Christian Union" have won'. So we have come to the conclusion that even if we meet all the conditions being put to us, the real argument (religious discrimination against Turkey) against our membership will still be there. The most important decision in Luxembourg, I believe, is the construction of a new Berlin wall, a cultural Berlin wall.'[64]

Undoubtedly, the EU's approach over this period greatly undermined its legitimacy in Turkey, thereby decreasing trust and weakening the pro-European and pro-democratic arguments of the modernising, Western-oriented forces.[65] As a result, anti-Western feelings among the Turkish public eventually resulted in the significant success of the nationalist and religious parties. As one Turkish academic observed,

> The rising power of nationalist parties and ultra-right groups, and the growth in religious movements has played a role in the Western attitude towards Turkey's domestic problems. Most of these groups have been anti-Western, partly because of the Western attitude and partly because of the Turkish politicians who fuelled the anti-Western aspirations in Turkey.[66]

In this respect, traditionally pro-European central right-wing parties that conducted the bulk of Turkish-EU relations in the past decades, lost significant support throughout 1990s. They received 51 percent of the votes in 1991, 39 per cent in 1995 and only 25 per cent in the 1999 general elections.[67] Even the customs union agreement of 1995, in which Turkish public opinion was highly concerned that Northern Cyprus was sold out to ease

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[62]Hasan Unal, Seminar on 'Seminar Series on Turkey', London School of Economics, London, 16 March 1999.

[63]Yavuz Donat 'Café Europa', *Milliyet,* 7 February 1998.

[64]*Financial Times*, 18 December 1997; Stephen Kinzer, 'Turkey, Rejected, will Freeze Ties to European Union', *New York Times,* 15 December 1997.

[65]Meltem Muftuler-Bac, 'The Never-Ending Story: Turkey and the European Union', *Middle Eastern Studies,* vol. 34, no. 4, (October 1998), p. 257.

[66]Gozen, *op.cit.*, p. 122.

the Greek objections to this agreement is enough to show to the extent that European policies had an impact on Turkish domestic politics. In addition to Cyprus, the European Parliament's demands for political reforms and constitutional amendments as a pre-requisite to endorse the agreement were perceived by Turkish public opinion, as well as by the ruling elite, as interference in Turkey's internal affairs. Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the pro-Islamist Refah (Welfare) Party fiercely criticised the agreement and argued that the West now had a new market to exploit relentlessly.[68] He also presented the agreement as a part of a Zionist-Christian plan to undermine the possible Turkish leadership in an Islamic Union and pledged to tear up the agreement.[69] Thus it can be justifiably argued that the attitude of Brussels had bolstered Islamist and nationalist votes.[70] In fact, general elections held in the same year resulted in a credible victory for the Refah Party while votes for the pro-Western central right and left parties fell significantly. Nationalist and pro-Islamist parties gained 35 percent of the votes (it was 13 per cent in 1987 and 17 per cent in 1991).[71] Moreover, the EU's rejection in 1997 and its policies on issues such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya and Turkey's own separatist war against the Kurdish guerrillas were effectively turned into ultra-nationalist Milliyetci Hareket Partisi (MHP), the Nationalist Action Party, votes during the 1999 elections.[72]

While Islamist groups turned to the Muslim world for allies, nationalists increasingly looked to the Turkic world. For example, the Refah Party's (RP) alternative policies with Iran and the Islamic world found considerable support among the Turkish electorate and

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[67]Cuneyt Ulsever, '1990'li Yillardaki Secimlerin Bir Analizi', *Hurriyet,* 10 February and 27 April 1999.

[68]*TBMM Tutanak Dergisi,* vol. 85, no. 4, pp. 403-10.

[69]Hakan Yavuz, 'Turkey's ''Imagined Enemies'': Kurds and Islamist', *The World Today*, vol. 52, no. 4, (1996), pp. 99-100.

[70]Alan Makovsky argued, 'Turks' exasperation with signs of rejection from the West in recent years has helped fuel Islamist gains at the polls'. 'Turkey's Fading European Dream', *Policy Watch,* no. 288, 11 December 1997.

[71]Nilufer Narli and Sinan Dirlik, 'Turkiye'nin Siyasal Haritasi', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 2, no. 9, (May-June 1996), p.133.

[72]M. Hakan Yavuz, 'The Politics of Fear: The Rise of the National Action Party (MHP) in Turkey', *Middle*

in fact reflected the disillusionment with Europe.[73] This was most evidenced when the RP emerged as the top party in the 1995 elections, increasing its vote from 10 percent in 1991 to 21 percent. Additionally, the 'region-centric' foreign policies of Bulent Ecevit's nationalist-left DSP could also be viewed in this context. The DSP advocated that Turkey, as a regional centre, should give more priority to its relations with the neighbouring and regional countries in order to establish an area of peace and security. As such, during the Gulf War, Ecevit strongly criticised the government's uncritical pro-American policies, opposed Turkey's tough stance against Iraq and visited Saddam Hussain before the war. He then sought ways for rapprochement with Iraq in 1998 while he was serving as deputy prime minister and masterminded the government's decision to refuse Washington's demand to use the Incirlik air base in southern Turkey close to the Iraqi border during the 1998 crisis between Iraq and the US.[74] Also, the policies of the ultra-nationalist MHP, which desires the unity of the world's Turks and advocates establishing special relations with the Turkic republics as the natural leader of the Turkic world, gained considerable electoral support. According to the MHP, Turkey also needed to concentrate more in those areas and every effort should be made to develop and institutionalise this special relationship as a strategic and national priority. The party even proposed creating a common market with the Turkic republics as an alternative to the EU.[75]

This trend became most evident with the general elections of early 1999, which resulted in significant victories for both the DSP and the MHP. The two parties received more than 40 per cent of the votes and formed a coalition government with Mesut

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East Journal, vol. 56, no. 2, (Spring 2002), p. 201.

[73]Necmettin Erbakan, 'Turkiye'nin Dis Politikasi Nasil Olmali?', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), p. 60

[74]Bulent Ecevit, 'Bolge-Merkezli Dis Politika', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), pp. 64-70; Sukru Elekdag, 'Ecevit'in Bolgesel Guvenlik Plani', *Milliyet,* 22 April 1996. For the Iraqi initiatives, 'Saddam'la Yeni Donem', *Hurriyet,* 6 February 1998; Cengiz Candar, 'Simdi Nerede Duruyoruz?', *Sabah,* 7 February 1998.

[75]*Yeni Yuzyil,* 28 April 1999.

Yilmaz's central right-wing ANAP.[76] In particular, the MHP's nationalist policies made more impact on the voters than any other party. MHP received 18 percent of the votes (compared to 8 percent in the 1995 elections).[77] Given the composition of the new government it was expected that nationalist elements would be increasingly emphasised in Turkish foreign policy and in this approach relations with the EU would be more balanced and would not be allowed to subjugate national interests. For example, as an outcome of this approach, it was expected that Cyprus would not be sacrificed for the sake of the EU membership. In fact, it is well known that the MHP was critical of Turkish-EU relations because joining the EU would require sharing sovereignty with other international organisations.[78] In the words of the foreign minister Ismail Cem, 'EU candidacy and membership is a goal for Turkey, not an obsession. Foreign policy covers a wide spectrum and Turkey's EU accession, though essential, represented only one of her two main goals. The other being to assume a central, decisive role in the emerging Eurasian reality.'[79] In fact this was clearly indicated in the government programme:

> We shall reinforce the potential of our country as a regional power through establishing multifaceted and balanced relations with all countries, in and out of our region. We shall endeavour to realize Turkey's aim of full membership in the European Union with equal rights and status as other members. Turkey will assume its rightful place in the integration process in Europe and while doing this, it will go on protecting its national rights and interests meticulously.[80]

A multi-regional approach in external relations

The EU's negative position towards Turkish membership motivated Turkey to seek more diverse economic and, in particular, political and military relations with other regions and to look for new alliance relationships including strategic partnership in line with its foreign and security policy objectives. Incidentally, the emergence of the new

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[76]RP got over 15 percent. *Hurriyet,* 27 April 1999.
[77]Mustafa Unal 'Milliyetci Sol Ruzgar, *Zaman,* 19 April 1999.
[78]Yavuz, 'The Politics', *op.cit.*, pp. 217-8.
[79]Cem, *op.cit.*, p. 223.
[80]*Program of the 57th Government Presented to the Turkish Grand National Assembly by Prime Minister*

foreign policy options in the wake of the Cold War in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Black Sea, and the Middle East became a driving force in this process. Prime minister Ecevit explained,

> The refusal of the European Union to grant membership to Turkey has played an educative role. It has made us realize that the world does not consist of Western Europe alone, that a country can become strong politically and economically by concentrating, by diversifying its international relations, all the over world, and we have been doing that with increasing success. And I am sure that sooner or later, the European Union will knock on Turkey's door and ask her to join the ranks, join the corps...[81]

As a result, at least in the early years of the 1990s, Turkey distanced itself from its traditional policy of Europeanisation as Turkish policy-makers increasingly pointed out other areas of interest.[82] As such, as subsequent chapters will show, Turkey increasingly improved its close economic, cultural, military and political relations with the Turkic republics of Central Asia, with Caucasia and the Balkans, Israel and the United States. Ankara also promoted and reactivated regional organisations such as the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Project and the Economic Co-operation Organisation. The scale of these relations even led some circles in Europe to think that the deepening ties particularly with the Turkic and Muslim world, when accompanied by the fact of European rejection, could have weakened Turkey's affinity to Europe and cause to break away from its traditional Western-oriented foreign policy.[83] As one Western analyst has put, 'ever since Ataturk, Turkey itself seems to prefer becoming the last wagon on the European train. But if Europe now closes off that option, perhaps Turkey will opt for becoming the locomotive on a pan-Turkish-Asian train instead'.[84] Following Ankara's decision to host the D-8 Summit in 1997 to boost economic cooperation among the

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Bülent Ecevit, 4 June 1999.

[81]Bulent Ecevit, speech delivered at the Washington Institute For Near East Policy, 28 September 1999.

[82]Eralp, 'Turkey and the European Union', *op.cit.*, pp. 173-4.

[83]Graham E. Fuller, 'Turkey's New Eastern Orientation' in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China,* Graham Fuller (ed.), (Oxford: Westview, 1993), p. 70.

[84]Gunter A. Frank, *The Centrality of Central Asia,* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1992), p. 23.

leading Muslim countries, German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel also acknowledged that Turkey was turning away from Europe out of deep disappointment with the EU, 'Turkey feels that it is wrongly treated by Europe. The Summit is not simply the result of Erbakan's more pro-Islamic political views.'[85]

The Luxembourg shock also became decisive in Ankara's move to replace Turkey's close relationship with Western Europe with a strategic partnership with the US and Turkey's improved relations with Israel.[86] Right after the historic summit, the Turkish prime minister Mesut Yilmaz declared that, 'Turkey is not isolated in its region and still has friends in Washington, the Caucasus region, Central Asia and has developing security relations with Israel.[87]

3.2. Relations with the United States: From allies to 'strategic partners'

In contrast to Turkey's politically tense relationship with the EU throughout the 1990s, Turkey was able to establish strong relations with the US due to the convergence of interests. Although strategic concerns were the dominant factor in the Turkish-US relationship during the Cold War years, economic and political issues also played a significant part in the relationship.[88] Despite the fact that the communist threat had disappeared from Turkish borders and the Soviet Union disintegrated, Ankara began to attach even greater importance to strengthening its bilateral ties with the US in the post-Cold War era. This was primarily due to growing strains in Turkey's relations with Europe.[89] Unlike the EU's perspective which placed less emphasis on strategic

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[85]*Milliyet,* 8 January 1997.

[86]Celik, *op.cit.,* p. 147.

[87]*Washington Post,* 15 December 1997.

[88]Hasan Koni, 'Yeni Uluslararasi Duzende Turk-Amerikan Iliskileri', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), pp. 427-35; Obrad Kesic, 'American-Turkish Relations at a Crossroads', *Mediterranean Studies,* vol. 6, no. 1, (Winter 1995), pp. 97-108.

[89]Sabri Sayari, 'Turkish Perspectives toward German and US Foreign Policy', conference on *The Parameters of Partnership: Germany, the US and Turkey: Challenges for German and American Foreign Policy,* Washington, American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, 24 October 1997.

imperatives than on political and social, even cultural, issues in its relations with Turkey, the US still retained a primarily strategic view of Turkey as a useful regional partner.[90] As Turkish foreign minister Cem put it, 'The EU has not realised the new economic and cultural dimensions that it will reach via Turkey. The US is more courageous than the EU.'[91]

Deepening Turkish-US strategic cooperation became even more visible following the EU's Luxembourg Summit as Ankara further sought to strengthen its existing relations with the US. Turkish prime minister Yilmaz's visit to Washington immediately after the summit can be interpreted as a reaction to Brussels' decision, but it should also be viewed as part of the ongoing relationship between the two countries. However, increasing bilateral relations should not be confined to one specific reason (the EU) and should be also viewed in terms of the 'new world order'. The US has remained the sole superpower in military and political terms.[92] There was a broad consensus among Turkish policy makers that the US was the pre-eminent player in global affairs and that only it had the power, capability and political will to play a major role in regional issues that concern Turkish foreign and security policies.[93] Besides, bilateral ties have been, to some extent, cordial since the 1970s. Furthermore, as Turkish deputy prime minister Ecevit put it, the US was more receptive towards Turkey than its European allies, 'Europeans do not have a vision about international issues. They prefer to interest themselves in their internal issues.'[94] This was most clearly evidenced during the Gulf War and the Yugoslav crises. US intervention was also needed to avert a highly probable Turco-Greek armed

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[90]Meliha Benli Altunisik and Ozlem Tur, *Turkey: Challanges of Continuity and Change,* (New York and Abingdon: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), p. 114; Larrabee, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

[91]*Sabah,* 4-5 December 1997.

[92]John Lewis Gaddis, 'Toward the Post-Cold War World', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 69, no. 4, (Fall 1990), p. 11.

[93]Sabri Sayari, 'Turkish-American Relations in the post-Cold War Era: Issues of Convergence and Divergence' in *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present and Future,* Mustafa Aydin and Cagri Erhan (eds.), (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 92.

confrontation over the deployment of S-300 missiles in southern Cyprus and over the Imia/Kardak islands crisis in 1996 which raised the question of sovereignty in the Aegean.

The US has long supported Turkey and puts special importance on the relations due to the latter's location and strategic importance in the Caucasus/Caspian basin, Central Asia, the Middle East and the Balkans.[95] It was the conviction in the US capital that, as stated by former US president Clinton, Turkey was a factor that will affect the shape of the world in the twenty-first century and was an important force in three regions: Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia.[96] This strategic relationship was even more important particularly in the Middle East, in which America's direct national interests stand, as Europe did not seem to give much importance to its relations with Turkey in this regard.[97] Essentially therefore, in the words of the US deputy secretary of state at the time, Turkish-US relations had 'even more of a hard headed, geopolitical, strategic rationale in the post-Cold War period than during the Cold War.'[98] As such, despite divergences on several issues during this period such as human rights problems of Turkey, the US policy of dual containment of Iraq and Iran, the future of Cyprus, Greek-Turkish relations, and finally Turkish weapons acquisition programmes, Ankara cooperated with Washington in several important areas of concern.[99] Onur Oymen, the undersecretary of Turkish foreign ministry during the Refah government, explained the level of cordial relations in 1997: 'Turkish-US relations are "excellent," and Turkey is "totally satisfied" with US policy toward

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[94]*Sabah,* 14 December 1997.

[95]Bruce Kuniholm, 'Turkey's Accession to the European Union: Differences in European and US Attitudes, and Challenges for Turkey', *Turkish Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, (Spring 2001), pp. 36-9.

[96]Alan Makovsky, 'With Bilateral Ties Flourishing: Clinton Visits Turkey' *Policy Watch,* no. 423, 12 November 1999.

[97]Heinz Kramer and Friedemann Muller, 'Relations with Turkey and the Caspian Basin Countries' in *Allied Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East,* Robert D. Blackwill and Michael Sturmer (eds.), 1997, CSIA Studies in International Security, Cambridge), p. 183.

[98]Strobe Talbott, 'U.S.-Turkish Relations in an Age of Interdependence', *Policy Watch*, 16 October 1998. Also see, Sami Kohen, 'Turk-Amerikan Iliskilerinde Yeni Anlayis', *Milliyet,* 23 February 1995; O. Metin Ozturk, 'Ortadogu'daki Son Gelismeler Acisindan Turkiye ve ABD'ye Bakis', *Yeni Forum,* vol. 16, no. 315, pp. 4-6.

[99]See, Kemal Kirisci, 'Turkey and the United States: Ambivalent Allies', *MERIA,* vol. 2, no.4, (November

Turkey's integration into Europe. Turkish-US diplomatic coordination was also effective regarding northern Iraq, Bosnia, the Caucasus, and implementation of the CFE treaty.'[100] Baki Ilkin, the Turkish ambassador to Washington, also explained that the relationship of the two countries was far beyond being that of only NATO allies and reached such a level that it could be defined as a 'enhanced partnership' or in the words of Clinton a 'strategic partnership'.

> We are no longer only NATO allies whose relationship, until a decade ago, was mainly based on cooperation in defence and security fields. In this transfigured post-Cold War landscape, Turkish-American cooperation continues to be of vital significance. In fact, our relationship has now reached an advanced stage, which we define as 'enhanced partnership'.[101]

Due to a convergence of strategic objectives, the two allies continually expanded bilateral cooperation over the decade in question. They had parallel policies in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the former Soviet territories. In fact, one could trace the roots of this special relationship both during and after the Gulf War of 1990-91. Turkey's decision to shift from its traditional policy of non-interference and non-involvement in the Middle East in order to join the US-led coalition against Iraq was perhaps better understood by the American leadership than Turkey's European allies. Then president George Bush praised Turkey's role: 'when Iraq invaded Kuwait, Turkey acted courageously to ensure that aggression would not stand. And as the whole world knows, the international coalition could not have achieved the liberation of Kuwait without Turkey's pivotal contributions.'[102] The Turkish proposal to create 'safe havens' in northern Iraq for the protection of the Iraqi Kurds fleeing from the Baghdad regime right after the war was also welcomed by the US and, in fact, the Turkey-based operations enforcing a 'no-fly-zone'

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[100]Oymen, *op.cit.*

[101]Ilkin, *op.cit.*

[102]*Turkish Review*, vol. 5, no. 25, (Autumn 1991), p. 104.

in northern Iraq became a key aspect of the US policy toward Iraq in the 1990s.[103] Contrary to Europe's stance, Washington generally stood behind Ankara on the Kurdish issue. Accordingly, the US accepted the PKK as a 'terrorist' organisation and backed the Turkish incursions against the group in northern Iraq[104] as well as Turkey's pressure on Syria to extradite the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. It was even claimed that the US helped Ankara in the capture of Ocalan in Kenya in 1998.[105] The US has also been supportive in the context of growing Turkish-Israeli strategic relations and joined the Turkish-Israeli joint maritime manoeuvres in 1998 and 1999.

In the same way, Turkish foreign and security policies seemed to coincide to a great extent with those of the US in Central Asia and the Caucasia/Caspian area.[106] Washington became quite keen to see Turkey as a role model with a relatively successful market economy, a secular, pluralistic-democratic system in a predominantly Islamic society for the newly-independent Turkic states rather than to see Iran filling the power vacuum that was emerging in post-Soviet Central Asia.[107] The US and Turkey had similar polices with respect to the oil politics in Caucasia and Turkey received American support for the proposed Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline, which would transport oil from the Caspian basin to world markets via Georgia and Turkey. Turkey and the US also agreed to foster the independence of the Caucasus states and to discourage the spread of Russian and Iranian

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[103]George S. Harris, 'US-Turkish Relations' in Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), pp. 191-2.

[104]US Defence Secretary Cohen said, 'The Turkish government has decided to enter northern Iraq to counter terrorist attacks. We believe that Turkey has no aim to occupy northern Iraq'. *Milliyet,* 13 June 1997.

[105]US State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns said, 'Syria ought to cease and desist from support for the PKK', *Sabah,* 8 May 1996.

[106]For a detailed discussion on US-Turkish economic, political and security cooperation in Central Asia see, Bulent Aras, 'US-Central Asian Relations: A View from Turkey', *MERIA,* vol. 1, no. 1, (January 1997).

[107]See, 'The emergence of the Central Asian Turkic Republics: An end to the identity crisis?', *Chapter Nine.*

dominance in the area.[108]

Turkish-US relations also seemed to be in harmony in the Balkans and in fact, as will be discussed, Turkish involvement or relative 'success' in regional affairs coincided with the US's heavy engagement in the Balkans. This in turn enabled Turkey to develop diplomatic, political, and military relations with several countries in the region and thereby increased Turkish influence. Given the fact that the EU was unable to contain the developments in the Balkans, Turkey increasingly looked to the US to intervene. Accordingly, Ankara strongly supported the US-led NATO initiatives throughout the crisis and participated in NATO's operations against Serbia by providing aircraft and vessels as well as troops for the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo and Bosnia. Turkey also agreed to train the Bosnian army with the US and thereby increased Turkey's military ties with the latter.[109] In the same way, US-Turkish harmony over the protection of newly-independent Macedonian territorial integrity and existence became also visible. The US responded to a Turkish call to play a role in the deployment of the UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPRDEP) which was deployed in Macedonia in 1993 and successfully defused a possible instance of Serbian aggression that could otherwise have resulted in a repeat of the atrocities witnessed in Bosnia. Similar patterns were also visible in Ankara's deepening military connections with Tirana owing to the fact that Turkish and US strategic interests coincided in Albania. Consequently, Turkish interests that overlapped with those of the US became the most significant factor allowing Turkey to engage actively in the Balkans.[110]

Finally, the US strongly supported the Turkish application to the EU and played a

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[108]Harris, *op.cit.*, p. 196.

[109]'Bosnak Askerleri Turkiye'de', *Cumhuriyet*, 15 May 1996.

[110]Ilhan Uzgel, 'The Balkans: Turkey's Stabilising Role' in *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power*, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci (eds), (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), pp. 54-5 and p. 65.

crucial role during the customs union agreement process when the negotiations reached a deadlock due to the Greek veto.[111] Clinton reiterated US support for Turkey's EU candidacy in his speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly, 'the future on the part of our allies in Europe encompasses the foresight to see that our vision of a Europe that is undivided, democratic and at peace for the first time in all of history, will never be complete unless and until it embraces Turkey. I have consistently urged European integration to move further and faster, and that includes Turkey.'[112] Against European efforts to have an autonomous defence identity within the Alliance, Washington has backed Turkey's view that ESDI should be developed within NATO without leading to discrimination against non-EU NATO members or the substitution of an EU body for NATO.

Turkish-US economic relations also improved in the 1990s. Turkey enjoyed the benefits of US most-favoured-nation trade treatment and the US trade preferences programme helped Turkey's goal of decreasing its trade deficit. Between 1990 and 2000 the volume of trade doubled from US$3.2 billion to US$6.9 billion while Turkey's exports to the US tripled, from US$970 million to US$3 billion. Thus, the US ranked second in terms of Turkey's exports and third in terms of Turkey's imports.[113] Turkey is also a long-term leading recipient of US arms; between 1990 and 1999 Turkish acquisitions reached over US$9 billion.[114]

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[111]Birand, *op.cit.*, pp. 459-60.
[112]'Clinton in Turkey', *Newspot,* (November-December 1999).
[113]http://www.dtm.gov.tr/anl/english/tr-us/general.htm
[114]http://www.fas.org/asmp/profiles/turkey.htm

PART THREE

THE MIDDLE EAST: THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW CENTRE OF THREAT TO TURKEY'S SECURITY INTERESTS

Turkey's security environment in south-east improved in the post-Cold War era partly due to the fact that Soviet political, financial aid and military assistance was no longer available to some of its Middle Eastern neighbours such as Iraq, Iran and particularly Syria. Iraq's military strength was further weakened by the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf War of 1991. All in all, Turkey emerged as a major military and economic power in the region which in turned raised expectations that Ankara would have a far more influential role in the politics of the area than before. Moreover, the Middle Eastern peace process of the early 1990s –a manifestation of the 'new world order' in the region– and the resultant lessening of the tension and strain between the Arab world and Israel, provided Turkey with an opportunity to enhance its strategic ties with both sides and thereby strengthen its own influence in the area. However, as will be seen in this chapter, this potentially promising environment soon faded away as new developments resulted in regional turbulence, which threatened Turkey's security interests and left little room for Ankara to manoeuvre in its attempt to pursue an effective foreign policy.

The Gulf War of 1990-1991, for example, turned out to be a disaster for Turkey in many ways. It served to interrupt its existing cordial relations with its southern neighbour, Iraq and also caused significant economic, political and security problems, both internally and externally. The new security environment and security threat from the south also helped to exacerbate the Kurdish issue enabling the separatist PKK to declare a full-scale war against Turkey, which in turn gave some of its southern neighbours an advantage on other issues, notably water. Additionally, deteriorating domestic political and socio-economic conditions coupled with the rise of nationalistic and religious extremism saw radical parties gain increased prominence in Turkey, allowing for example, the Islamist Refah Party to govern for the first time in the Republic's history, bringing a serious

challenge to the established secular regime and foreign and security policy direction of the country, which in the end, along with the PKK issue, diverted Turkey's attention from external developments and opportunities. Subsequently, Ankara found it extremely difficult to deal with these increasing, closely-related, internal and external security challenges on its own. In order to neutralise the newly-emerging southern threat and resultant internal security concerns, Turkey began to foster close relations with Israel to the level of becoming 'strategic partners'. Such relations attracted serious criticism and resentment from the Arab world as well as some sectors of the Turkish public, especially over advanced military ties with Israel.

CHAPTER FOUR
TURKISH POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE GULF CRISIS

4.1. Turkey and the Gulf War: The creation of a new centre of threat

The second Gulf War which began in August 1990 with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait not only served to overshadow the international europhoria that had emerged following the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe but also opened up a new challenge to Turkey's security environment.[1] Although the influence of the Soviet Union fell dramatically in the Middle East, thus enabling Turkey to play a greater role in the regional politics, its preoccupation with the political, economic and security implications of the war both seriously limited its potential role and restricted it from concentrating on establishing cordial relations, and thus a greater presence and influence in the region.

The Gulf War underlined the fact that the global Soviet threat had now been replaced by serious regional challenges and therefore necessitated a redefinition of Turkish policies towards the region. As such, during the Gulf War, Turkey pursued a more active role in contrast to its more traditional non-intervention policy in the region by which it refrained from taking sides in intra-Arab disputes and attempted to maintain good relations with the Arab countries.[2] This new trend in Turkish foreign policy could be viewed as the result of Ankara's belief that the current situation was not a simple intra-Arab dispute but rather

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[1]For an in-depth discussion on the origins of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait see, Laith Kubba, 'The War's Impact on Iraq' in *The Iran-Iraq War: The Policies of Aggression,* Farhang Rajaee (ed.), (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), p. 48; Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-91: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order,* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1993), p. 45; Efraim Karsh and Inari Rautsi, *Saddam Hussein: A Political Biography*, (New York: The Free Press, 1991), p. 211; Efraim Karsh, 'Why did Saddam Invade Kuwait?' in *The Gulf Crisis: Politico-Military Implications*, (London: London Defence Studies, 1990), pp. 35-53. For reactions and contributions of the international community to the international front against Iraq see, James Gow, 'The Balance of Forces in the Gulf: A Summary' in *The Gulf Crisis: Politico-Military Implications*, (London: London Defence Studies, 1990), pp. 2-3; Andrew Bennett, 'Sheriff of the Posse: American Leadership in the Desert Storm Coalition' in *Friends in Need: Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf War,* Andrew Bennett, Joseph Lepgold and Danny Unger (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 42..

[2]Ali L. Karaosmanoglu, 'Turkey: Between the Middle East and Western Europe', *International Journal of Turkish Studies,* vol. 6, no. 1-2, (Winter 1992-94), p. 14; Seyfi Tashan, 'Introduction' in *Middle East, Turkey and the Atlantic Alliance,* Ali L. Karaosmanoglu and Seyfi Tashan (eds.), (Ankara: Foreign Policy Institute, 1987), pp. 6-7; Philip Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East*, (London: Pinter for RUSI, 1991), pp. 65-7.

had severe implications for the wider area and posed a serious threat to Turkey's immediate regional interests. Thus, this perception played a major role in Turkey's decision to give up its stable low-key diplomacy towards the region at the time of the Gulf War.

Initially, Turkish policy makers viewed the Gulf War as a significant opportunity to restore Turkey's declining strategic importance in the eyes of the West following the end of the Cold War. Moreover, there was a conviction that this could be a significant opportunity for Turkey to develop into an important economic, political and military role in the region.[3] It was also clear that Turkey did not want to be left out of the negotiations if, and when, Iraq's destiny was decided. Principally, Turkey wanted its interests to be taken into consideration if, for example, Iraq's territorial integrity disintegrated and neighbouring Iraqi Kurds gained some measure of independence.[4]

Of particular interest was President Ozal's determination (in some cases by circumventing the parliament and government) to guide Turkey's policies during the crisis, despite the fact that the constitution mainly provided him with a ceremonial role.[5] According to Ozal, Turkey had to change its passive and inflexible traditional foreign policies, which were no longer appropriate, in the political environment of the new era. He therefore argued that Turkey should adapt more pragmatic, risk-taking and active policies in order to become an important player in international politics in the wake of the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe as he explained. 'The most important factor in a political change is to predict developments in a changing world beforehand and have the necessary precautions accordingly. Let me make it clear: let's leave timid and

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[3]Erik J. Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* (London: L. B. Tauris, 1995), pp. 317-8.

[4]David Kushner, 'Turkey: Iraq's European Neighbour' in *Iraq's Road to War,* Amatzia Baram and Barry Rubin (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 1993), p. 211.

[5]For decision making process during the Gulf Crisis see, Oguz Eris, 'Korfez Krizi ve Turkiye'de Karar Alma Sureci' in *Degisen Dunya ve Turkiye,* Faruk Sonmezoglu (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1995), p. 260; Ramazan Gozen, 'Turk Dis Politikasinda Karar Alma Mekanizmasi, Turgut Ozal ve Korfez Krizi, *Yeni*

conservative (passive) policies behind. We should follow more active and far-sighted policies.'[6] Thus, Ozal argued that Turkey should play a leading role in any arrangements, which would shape politics in the Middle East. In his view, therefore, Turkey could no longer be neutral and it was time for it 'to be at the table, not on the menu'.[7]

> They (the Europeans) are trying to alienate Turkey from Europe by excluding us from the EC. Now we have a historic opportunity...we have a chance of allying with the West in an important crisis in such a position where we are right. If you cannot take this advantage, then there is no point in being a politician, prime minister or president.[8]

He was even ready to take a risk joining the war to, in his words, 'put in one and take out three'.[9] As general Necip Torumtay, who resigned along with two senior ministers, as the chief of the general staff in protest at Ozal's policies[10], would later note in his memoirs Ozal was anxious to send troops to join the coalition forces in the Gulf in order to be one of the main powers to secure the most interest at the conclusion of the war when Iraq was defeated.[11] He was even thinking of a restricted invasion of Iraq that would enable Turkey to control the two oil-rich provinces of Kirkuk and Mousul, which were also within the borders of the *Misak-i Milli*.[12] However, in the face of strong criticism from the opposition parties (as well as from his own ruling party members, ANAP), the media and the army, Ozal was unable to implement some of these policies and was forced to back down from sending troops to join the coalition forces in the Gulf.[13]

Turkiye, vol. 2, no. 9, (May-June 1996), pp. 286-302.

[6]*Cumhurbaskani Turgut Ozal'in Dunyadaki Yeni Dengeler ve Turkiye Konulu Pazar Toplantilarinda Yaptiklari Konusma,* (ANAP: 17 Kasim 1991).

[7]Ramazan Gozen, 'Turgut Ozal and Turkish Foreign Policy: Style and Vision', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 20, nos. 3-4, (1996), p. 91; Gulistan Gurbey, 'Ozal Donemi Turk Dis Politikasi', *Dis Politka Dergisi,* vol. 6, no, 2, (December 1995), p. 51.

[8]Mehmet Barlas, *Turgut Ozal'in Anilari,* (Istanbul: 1994), p. 128.

[9]'Opposition Rejects Ozal's Offer to Discuss Middle East', *Dateline Turkey,* 18 August 1990.

[10]'Surprise Resignation of Army Chief Stuns Political Observers in Ankara', *Dateline Turkey,* 1 December 1990; 'Defence Minister Resigns', *Dateline Turkey,* 20 October 1990.

[11]Necip Torumtay, *Orgeneral Torumtay'in Anilari,* (Istanbul: Milliyet, 1993), p. 111.

[12]*Ibid..*, p. 115; Hulki Cevizoglu, *Korfez Savasi ve Ozal Diplomasisi,* (Istanbul: Form, 1991), p. 37.

[13]For example, Oktay Eksi, a leading columnist at the Istanbul daily *Hurriyet,* compared Ozal's adventurous policy with the historic decision which resulted in Turkey entering World War I in 1914. Suleyman Demirel, the leader of the Right Path Party, called the whole affair as treacherous and urged the

Ankara's decision to take a greater role in the Middle East, and Iraq in particular, was also motivated by concerns over the ramifications of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It was obvious that such a change in a fragile region could easily lead to the emergence of one dominant economic and, more importantly, military power. This was not a desirable development in respect to Turkey's own politico-economic interests. Therefore, soon after the invasion, Turkey declared that Iraq's aggression was unacceptable and urged Baghdad to withdraw from Kuwait. In the words of the then Turkish trade minister, 'Turkey regretted Iraq's occupation of Kuwait' which represents 'a threat to the maintenance of friendship in the region.'[14]

Furthermore, Iraq's massive arms build-up, including weapons of mass destruction in the 1980s and early 1990s made it one of the strongest military powers in the region.[15] Moreover, at the beginning of the Gulf crisis in August 1990, Iraq deployed perhaps the largest ballistic missile force in the Third World; its chemical stock numbered thousands of tons, and its biological 'weaponisation' programme and nuclear research projects were at an advanced stage.[16] The whole situation, which had already changed the military balance to Turkey's disadvantage, threatened Turkey's national security interests. This threat became even more critical, given the existence of differences between the two neighbours, notably on the water issue. Thus, according to Ozal, Iraq's military capability should be eliminated once and for all to secure Turkey's strategic interests.

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government not to take it upon itself to act as the 'saviour or hero in the region.' *Dateline Turkey,* 11 August 1990 and 'Opponents: President Would Fight', *Dateline Turkey,* 8 September 1990; William Hale, 'Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis', *International Affairs,* vol. 68, no. 4, (October 1992), p. 684.

[14]*BBC Summary of World Broadcast ME,* 3 August 1990.

[15]According to estimates, between 1981-1985 Iraq purchased in excess of US$6.5 billion worth of arms making it the second largest arms market in the world. Mensur Akgun, 'Iran-Irak Savasi, Bolge Dengeleri ve Turkiye' in *Ortadogu Sorunlari ve Turkiye,* Haluk Ulman (ed.), (Istanbul: TUSES, 1991), pp. 54-6. By the time of the 1988 cease-fire with Iran, Iraq's army possessed up to 5700 main battle tanks, 3700 artillery tubes and an active manpower of some 800,000 which reached to 955,000 following the invasion. Andrew Rathmell, *The Changing Military Balance in the Gulf,* (London: RUSI, 1996), p. 25; *The Independent,* 6 August 1990.

[16]Martin S. Navias, 'Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction' in *The Gulf Crisis: Politico-Military*

> There is an oil-rich country at our doorstep, which will be more powerful with the oil wealth of Kuwait, equipped with chemical weapons, missiles, and massive armaments who had previously bargained with us on the water supply of the Euphrates and the Tigris. Would you want to see such a country as a neighbour, which is likely to create more strategic problems for you concerning the water issue in the future?[17]

Although Turkey was not directly involved in the war, it contributed political, economic and military support within the framework of the UN resolutions to the allied war effort.[18] Turkey allowed the allied forces to use the Incirlik air base in southern Turkey, close to the Iraqi border, against Iraq during the war.[19] Strategically this was an important base, which enabled the allied forces to reach targets within Iraq more easily. Turkey also deployed an estimated 100,000 troops along its 240 km border with Iraq before the war broke out. This pinned down about eight Iraqi divisions in the north of the country who feared that the coalition forces would initiate a second front in the north.[20] Furthermore, following UN Security Council Resolution 661 (1990), which called for a complete economic embargo on Iraq, Turkey was among the first to implement sanctions and decided to close down the pipeline that carried half of Iraq's oil exports through Turkey from Kirkuk to Yumurtalik on Turkey's East Mediterranean coast.[21] It seemed that Ozal rushed this decision by himself reflecting his strong anti-Saddam views. General Torumtay would later reveal that he heard the decision on TV and he did not think that ministry of foreign affairs (possibly the cabinet) knew it before hand.[22] It also froze all

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Implications, (London: London Defence Studies, 1990), p. 54.

[17]*Cumhurbaskani Turgut Ozal'in '21. Asir Turkiye'nin ve Turkler'in Asri Olacaktir'Konulu Konusmalari,* (Bursa: ANAP, 22 May 1991). Also see prime minister Yildirim Akbulut's statement, Mustafa Aydin, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Gulf War of 1990-1991,* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1998), p. 16.

[18]See, Saban Calis, *The Role of Identity in the Making of Modern Turkish Foreign Policy,* Unpublished PhD Thesis, (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1996), pp. 359-60.

[19]'National Assembly Gives Ministers Permission to Send Troops to Gulf', *Dateline Turkey,* 8 September 1990; *Hurriyet,* 18 January 1991.

[20]Tozun Bahceli, 'Turkey, the Gulf Crisis, and the New World Order' in *The Gulf War and the New World Order,* Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael (eds.), (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), p. 435; M. Cihat Akyol, 'Korfez Savasi', *Yeni Forum,* vol. 12, no. 261, (February 1991), p. 54.

[21]'Ankara Boru Hattini Kapatti', *Cumhuriyet,* 8 August 1990.

[22]Torumtay, *op.cit.*, p. 103.

Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets in Turkey in August 1990.[23] However, as one Turkish diplomat noted, this was not just a simple matter of shutting down the oil pipeline as it had serious implications for Turkey's economic and political relationship with Iraq.[24] This was evidenced by the visit of Taha Yassin Ramadan, a senior lieutenant of Saddam Hussein, to Ankara before the pipeline's closure. He warned Turkey that closing the pipeline would 'create an atmosphere of distrust between the countries.'[25] In economic terms, this aggravated relations with Iraq, which was Turkey's third largest trading partner, and resulted in the loss of some US$400 million annual income form pipeline transit fees in addition to the loss of considerable secondary economic benefits.[26] Turkey obtained about 60% of its oil imports from Iraq (10% of the crude flowing through the pipeline) and the increase in world oil prices cost Turkey an extra US$1 billion a year as it turned to other countries for its oil imports.[27] It also risked the repayments of US$2-3 billion outstanding Iraqi debts and affected Turkish companies that had construction projects with assets worth well over US$2 billion tied up in Iraq.[28] One Turkish company for example was involved in a dam project in Iraq worth US$1.5 billion and employing mainly Turkish 2,500 construction workers.[29]

Despite early expectations that the Gulf War could benefit Turkey, it ended with significant negative repercussions for Turkey. In the immediate aftermath of the war, Turkey had to confront a huge Kurdish refugee flow towards its borders following Iraq's

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[23]Gurbey, *op.cit.*, p. 61; *BBC World Service,* 26 August 1990.

[24]*Dateline Turkey,* 18 August 1990.

[25]'Bagdat'tan Sert Mesajlar', *Cumhuriyet,* 6 August 1990; *The Independent,* 6 August 1990; Ilter Turan, 'Kuwait Crisis: Turkey Counts the Cost', *Dateline Turkey,* 18 August 1990..

[26]'Krizin Turkiye'ye Faturasi Agir', *Cumhuriyet,* 17 August 1990; *Dateline Turkey,* 11 August 1990; Philip Robins, 'Turkish Foreign Policy and the Gulf Crisis: Adventurist or Dynamic?' in *Turkish Foreign Policy*, C. H. Dodd (ed.), (Cambridge: The Eatlon Press, 1992), p. 72.

[27]Nurcan Yuzbasioglu, 'Korfez Krizi'nin Turkiye Ekonomisi Uzerindeki Etkileri (1990-1991), *Hazine ve Dis Ticaret Dergisi,* no. 13, (June 1992), p. 92; *The Guardian,* 7 August 1990.

[28]*Dateline Turkey,* 18 August and 8 September 1990.

[29]'ENKA Workers Begin to Pull out from Dam Project in Iraq', *Dateline Turkey,* 18 August 1990.

operations to suppress the post-war uprisings.[30] At one point, according to the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs, nearly half a million (466,000) Kurdish refugees travelled to the Iraqi-Turkish border.[31] Initially, Turkey did not want to absorb any refugees as it had already provided refuge to 60,000 refugees fleeing from Saddam's bombings in 1998.[32] Turkey was also concerned that receiving a large number of Kurds could increase nationalism among its own Kurdish community or result in a highly destabilising and expensive Afghan- or Palestinian-style refugee problem.[33] The possibility of there being some separatist PKK guerrillas amongst the refugees was another reason for Turkey not wanting to host any more refugees. However, due to the harsh climatic conditions that the refugees faced in the Turkish border area and the publicity of the issue in the international media, Turkey was forced to admit at least 400,000 refugees.[34] Financially, Turkey almost single-handedly carried the whole burden supplying relief aid worth nearly US$100 million to the refugees.[35]

As already noted the Gulf War had disastrous results for the Turkish economy.[36] The Turkish foreign minister Hikmet Cetin claimed 'Turkey is the country most affected by

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[30]For the uprisings against the Baghdad regime by the Kurds in the north and the Shi'ites in the south and its consequences see, Elizabeth N. Offen, 'Migrants and Refugees: The Human Toll' in *The Gulf Crisis and its Global Aftermath,* Gad Barzilai, Aharon Klieman and Gil Shidlo (eds.), (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 104; Amatzia Baram, 'The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait: Decision Making in Baghdad' in *Iraq's Road to War,* Amatzia Baram and Barry Rubin (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 1993), p. 27; Ofra Bengio, 'Iraq's Shi'a and Kurdish Communities: From Resentment to Revolt' in *Iraq's Road to War,* Amatzia Baram and Barry Rubin (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 1993), pp. 51-69.

[31]*Newspot,* 2 May 1991.

[32]*Newspot,* 9 May 1991.

[33]Nicole and Hugh Pope, *Turkey Unveiled: From Ataturk and After,* (London: John Murray, 1997), p. 229.

[34]Turkey's proposal to create 'safe havens' in northern Iraq for the protection of refugees from further Iraqi attack was accepted by the Allied powers. A multilateral force of 16,000 troops was deployed known 'Operation Provide Comfort' and with the participation of US, British and French warplanes and support aircraft using Turkey's Incirlik NATO airbase patrolled the no-fly zone above the 36th parallel in northern Iraq. The scheme was replaced by Operation Northern Watch without French participation later in 1995. 'President Ozal Proposes UN-Controlled Security Zone in northern Iraq for Temporary Settlements of Refugees', *Newspot,* 11 April 1991 and 2 May 1991; 'Participants Informed of Turkey's Permission for Deployment of Multinational Force', *Newspot,* 25 July 1991; Ramazan Gozen, 'Operation Provide Comfort: Origins and Objectives', *AUSBFD,* vol. 50, nos. 3-4, (June-December 1995), pp. 174-91.

[35]This was seven times that of all foreign aid *Newspot,* 2, 9 and 23 May 1991.

[36]For a detailed discussion on the effects of the Gulf War on Turkish economy see, Kadir Saglam, *Ortadogu'da ve Dunyada Korfez Savasi ile Degisen Guc Dengeleri,* (Istanbul: Elit Kitaplar, 1999), pp.

the embargo on Iraq and has lost US$20 billion in three years.'[37] The final cost was believed to be no less than US$35 billion.[38] This included lost trade with Iraq; fees from transit trade; tourism revenues; lost construction contracts; worker's remittances; increased oil prices and lost Iraqi repayments.[39] In particular, the Gulf war severely hit the south-eastern part of the country, causing higher unemployment rates and social unrest, which in turn provided a fertile environment for the PKK to recruit more members.[40] For example, the transit trade of 7,000 trucks and trailers crossing Turkey into Iraq everyday was cut off once the war commenced and did not return to previous levels for the duration of the period understudy.[41] However, Turkey's huge losses, despite early expectations, were not compensated. Turkey was only scheduled to receive a total of US$3.5 billion in oil, grants and loans from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Japan and the EC.[42] In addition, the annual US security assistance package increased from US$553.4 million to US$635.4 and Turkey further received an estimated US$8 billion worth of arms from the US and Germany.[43] However, such economic support fell for short of covering the total cost of the war for Turkey and did not even settle the bill as far as tangible, real and immediate Turkish revenue losses from the pipeline and trade with Iraq was concerned. No doubt, massive economic losses and the loss of the Middle East market exacerbated the economic problems that Turkey was facing and thereby adversely affected Turkey's overall economic strength which in return effected Turkey's ability in its foreign policy initiatives. This precluded Turkey's ability to adopt a pro-active role on the foreign policy

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[37]'Cetin: Turkey Sustains Huge Loses from Embargo on Iraq', *Newspot,* 13 May 1994.

[38]See Turkish prime minister Ecevit's speech at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 28 September 1999.

[39]'Prsident Ozal Satisfied with the US Visit', *Dateline Turkey,* 6 October 1990; 'Gulf Crisis Hits Turkish Tourism', *Dateline Turkey,* 1 September 1990.

[40]'Guneydogu'nun Iki Onemli Sorunu: Guvenlik ve Isssizlik' *Cumhuriyet,* 18 June 1992.

[41]*Newspot,* 5 December 1991.

[42]*Milliyet,* 25 January 1996.

[43]Bruce R. Kuniholm, 'Turkey', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 70, no. 2, (Spring 1991), p. 38.

front as well as seize the opportunities presented to itself by the regional and international developments.

Moreover, Turkey's hope that its position in the war would ease some obstacles preventing EC membership did not work as expected. On the contrary, it was left outside the Community throughout the 1990s. Ironically, even the EC's Gulf compensation aid for Turkey's losses from the crisis was made contingent on Turkey's human rights record.[44] In this respect, president Ozal's 1991 letter to EC member states summarised Ankara's frustration with Brussels. 'These days when the war in the Gulf has ended and efforts are being made to achieve regional peace, the Community has not strengthened Turkey-EC relations as was intended and anticipated. This is causing uneasiness in the Turkish public opinion and leading us to doubt the intentions of the EC.'[45]

Finally (as will be discussed in detail in the next chapter) the power vacuum in northern Iraq created after the Gulf War not only facilitated the formation of an actual Kurdish state as a new neighbour but also offered a perfect base for operations against targets in Turkey and gave a new impetus to the PKK. Moreover, it is widely believed that Turkey's anti-Saddam stance throughout the crisis provoked Baghdad to provide military and logistic support to the PKK, and allowed it to station itself in the Iraqi territories. Ozal publicly accused Iraq of supporting the PKK, something which was later denied by the Baghdad regime.[46] Similarly, Resul Mamand, the leader of the Iraqi Kurdistan Socialist Party, confirmed Iraq's support for the PKK, and Ocalan, during his trial, acknowledged that Iraq provided intelligence about Turkish military operations in northern Iraq.[47] Thus, the Gulf conflict became a turning point for the PKK, as it increased its operational

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[44]*Dateline Turkey,* 17 November 1990.

[45]'President Turgut Ozal's Letter to EC Member Country Prime Ministers', *Newspot,* 7 March 1991.

[46]'Ozal: PKK'yi Saddam Destekliyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 7 September 1992 and 'Saddam'a Dort Uyari', *Cumhuriyet,* 13 October 1992.

[47]'Bagdat PKK'ya Destek Veriyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 4 May 1992; *Hurriyet,* 2 June 1999.

capability as a result of having new arms and bases available to infiltrate Turkey.[48] Ocalan also claimed that the organisation obtained most of its weapons during, and after, the war as the region became a arms 'bazaar'.[49] Additionally, deteriorating economic conditions, particularly in the southern region of Turkey as a result of the UN embargo imposed on Iraq and the loss of the Iraqi market, provided new waves of recruits to the PKK. Businessmen and industrialists in the region stressed that the UN embargo was actually more detrimental to Turkey than Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.[50] The PKK repeatedly called the Kurdish citizens of the region to revolt and intensified attacks on Turkey. This resulted in massive migration and casualties.[51] Between 1984 and 1991 casualties in the conflicts were estimated at 3,568. This figure jumped to 16,613 in three years, between 1992 and 1995.[52]

For Turkey perhaps the only real advantage of the Gulf war, apart from the fact that it strengthened its position in the eyes of Washington as a reliable strategic ally, was that Iraq lost its military capacity and was both economically and politically weakened. Moreover, the war also gave a further impetus to the arms race as the Gulf nations alone ordered in excess of US$20 billion worth of arms in 1990 and increased their defence expenditures to about 20 percent between 1990 and 1995.[53]

4.2. Water disputes: A source for future conflicts?

The water issue has been a key issue that has pre-occupied political concerns in the Middle East over the last two decades as the region is the most water-poor region of the

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[48]Mehmet Ali Birand, *APO ve PKK,* (Istanbul: Milliyet, 1992), pp. 253-4.

[49]*Hurriyet*, 18 March 1999.

[50]'Turkey is being Punished by the Embargo', *Newspot*, 19 August 1994; *Cumhuriyet,* 2 August 1996.

[51]'Kanli Nevruz, 22 Olu', *Cumhuriyet,* 22 March 1992; 'Guneydoguda Kanli Gun: 88 Olu', *Cumhuriyet,* 30 September 1992; 'Kan, Goc, Eylem', *Cumhuriyet,* 25 August 1992.

[52]For the PKK violence in the post-Gulf War period see, Kemal Kirisci and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict,* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), pp. 127-33.

[53]*SIPRI Year Book 1998,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 196; Anthony H. Cordesman, 'After the Gulf War: The World Arms Trade and Its Arms Races in the 1990s' in *RUSI and Brasseys's Defence Year Book 1992,* (London and Virginia: Brassey's, 1992), p. 208.

globe, with the lowest per capita consumption of water. According to estimates, by the year 2025 only Iran, Iraq and Turkey will have an acceptable minimum water supply (annual 1000 cum per capita).[54] It has even been widely argued that the conflict over borders, religion and race may pale into insignificance compared with the potential future conflict over water.[55]

In turn, the issue, which is strongly linked to the Kurdish problem, is also an important factor in limiting cordial relations between Turkey and its two southern neighbours, Syria and Iraq. The conflict over water conflict, particularly with Syria, continued throughout the 1990s as Ankara repeatedly accused Damascus of harbouring the Kurdish rebels to gain leverage over the water issue. The tension reached a breaking point at the heights of PKK attacks and the crisis almost brought the two neighbours to the brink of a war which was prevented by a last minute settlement.[56] Thus, in Ankara's view, Damascus remained as major regional actor giving a lifeline to the PKK's attacks on Turkey over the last decade. Moreover, historical differences, Syria's territorial claim and its advanced military build-up made Damascus a key external threat in the eyes of Turkish policy makers during this period.

The Euphrates and Tigris rivers, which rise in Turkey and flow into the Gulf through the territories of Syria and Iraq, are two vital water sources for the region.[57] Turkey's decision to use the two rivers for irrigation and hydroelectricity purposes in the early

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[54]Miriam R. Lowi, 'Rivers of Conflict, Rivers of Peace', *Journal of International Affairs,* vol. 49, no. 1, (Summer 1995), p. 124; Naji Abi-Aqd and Michel Grenon, *Instability and Conflict in the Middle East: People, Petroleum and Security Threats,* (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 138-9.

[55]One aspect of the issue aggravating the already fragile situation is that there is a rapid growth in the region's population (2.8%) and the major water resources of the region are shared while most of the regional countries are dependent on foreign water supplies to varying degrees. Abi-Aqd and Grenon, *op.cit.*, pp. 137-40; John Bulloch and Adel Darwish, *Water Wars: Coming Conflicts in the Middle East,* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1993), p. 19. For example, King Hussein warned once that 'we can go to a war not for any reason, but for water. Dogu Ergil, 'Ortadogu'da Su Savaslari mi?', *AUSBFD,* vol. 45, nos. 1-4, (1990), p. 59.

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[57]Turkey provides 89% and Syria 11% of the annual water potential of the Euphrates, while Turkey provides 51% and Iraq 39% of the Tigris. Mehmet Gonlubol and F. Hakan Bingun, '1990-95 Donemi

1980s with the South-East Anatolian Project (Guneydogu Anadolu Projesi, GAP), which would double the country's electricity capacity and increase Turkey's irrigated farmland by one third, as well as creating jobs for some five million people, has become a source of dispute with the two downstream countries, Syria and Iraq.[58] The two neighbours repeatedly voiced their uneasiness over Turkey's decision to go ahead with the project.[59] Iraq and Syria considered the Euphrates an international river and demanded the implementation of the guidelines of the International Law Commission of the UN which restrains upstream states from diverting rivers without consultation or causing appreciable harm to their downstream neighbours. Turkey, however, claimed that the Euphrates was a 'cross-boundary waterway' and wished for exclusive sovereignty over the river until it reached the Syrian border.[60]

Syria and Iraq feared that with the completion of the GAP project, Turkey would eventually release less water than previously. It has the potential to deprive Syria of 40 per cent and Iraq of up to 80 percent of its Euphrates water.[61] This was perceived by Damascus as a threat to its existence, as Syria relied heavily on the Euphrates, which alone represented up to 86 percent of its available water resources. Thus, any low level supplies from the Euphrates heavily affected Syria's agriculture as well as its main hydroelectric energy source, the Tabqa Dam built on the Euphrates.[62] Syria's heavy

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Turk Dis Politikasi' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi (1919-1995),* (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), pp. 668-9.

[58]The project is one of Turkey's biggest public investment and the largest construction project in the countries bordering the Mediterranean. When fully implemented, it will comprise 22 dams and 19 power stations cost US$32 billion. Osman Tekinel, 'Gap'in Ekonomiye Olasi Etkisi', *Dunya,* 11 May 1991; John F. Kolars and William A. Mitchell, *The Euphrates River and the Southeast Anatolia Development Project,* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991); Murat Ozgokceler, 'GAP'in Gelecegi', *Strateji,* no. 3, (1995), p. 189.

[59]'Iraq and Syria Ask Turkey to Reduce Period Euphrates will be Cut', *Dateline Turkey,* 20-26 January 1990.

[60]For the legal arguments see, Rauf Versan, 'Guneydogu Anadolu Projesi ve Hukuk Acisindan Turk-Arab Iliskileri' in *Su Sorunu, Turkiye ve Ortadogu,* Sabahattin Sen (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1993), pp. 441-6.

[61]Robert Bowker, *Beyond Peace: The Search for Security in the Middle East,* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), p. 144; A. J. Venter, 'The Oldest Threat: Water in the Middle East', *Middle East Policy,* vol. 6, no. 1, (June 1998), pp. 128-32.

[62]Murhaf Jouejati, 'Water Politics as High Politics: The Case of Turkey and Syria' in *Reluctant Neighbor:*

reliance on the Euphrates waters for agricultural, industrial, irrigation, power supply, and domestic use considerably increased due to economic progress and population growth. In particular, the industrial sector expanded as a result of economic liberalisation in the early 1990s. Syria enjoyed growth rates of around 8 percent per year from 1990 to 1993, though this figure was halved in the second part of the 1990s.[63] Furthermore, with the rising demands for food from a population growing at a rate of 3.6 percent a year (2.7% between 1995 and 2000), Syria planned to expand the irrigated areas by up to three to four times. Thus, Syria, joined by Iraq, asserted that the amount of water to be released from the Euphrates should not be less than 700 cum/s.[64] This meant that Turkey would have had to let two-third of the Euphrates river flow go to Syria and Iraq as the annual average flow of the river approximates around 1000 cum/s.[65]

However, Turkey argued that if it accepts this, the remaining part would not be sufficient to enable the completion of the GAP project.[66] Besides, Turkey's water demand will continue to rise in the years to come as its population is projected to increase by 20 percent in the next ten years.[67] Turkey further claimed that Syria was getting more water than it actually needed. 'At the moment we are giving them ten times what they need, so what is the issue?' Emre Gonensay, the Turkish foreign minister, claimed.[68] To accommodate the rising concerns of its two neighbours, Turkey signed a protocol with Syria in 1987 which guaranteed that 500 cum/s water would pass from the Euphrates

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Turkey's Role in the Middle East, Henri J. Barkey (ed.), (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 1996), p. 133.

[63]Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond A. Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System,* (London and New York: Routledge), p. 181.

[64]Jouejati, *op.cit.*, pp. 139-40.

[65]Gun Kut, 'Burning Waters: The Hydropolitics of the Euphrates and Tigris', *New Perspectives on Turkey,* no. 9, (Fall 1993), pp. 12-3; *Water Issues Between Turkey, Syria and Iraq*, (Ankara: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996), pp. 15-23.

[66]Sukru Elekdag, 'Suriye'nin Gercek Niyetleri', *Milliyet,* 26 August 1996.

[67]Samir Salha, 'GAP Projesinin Turkiye'nin Dis Politikasina Etkileri', *Dis Politika,* vol. 4, no. 2, (July 1993), p. 92. The population in Turkey increased from 56 million in 1990 to 68 million in 2000. http://www.die.gov.tr

[68]'Trouble with the Neighbours', *The Economist,* 8 June 1996.

water across the shared border. Moreover, Turkey assured its neighbours that the GAP project was of sufficient magnitude to provide economic benefits for, and stimulate development in neighbouring countries.[69]

However, according to the Syrian government, Turkey was using the water issue as a weapon to play a leading political role in the region and to encircle Syria.[70] Ankara, in turn, accused Syria of providing shelter, arms and financial support to the PKK as a way of pressurising Ankara concerning over the water issue.[71] Ozal argued that there was a close connection between terrorism and the GAP project as, 'the construction of the dams helped Syria and Iraq to think that water flow will be cut off completely one day. This perception urged them to support terrorism as the only way to weaken Turkey.'[72] Similarly, president Demirel accused Damascus of harbouring the PKK as a way of forcing Turkey into giving concessions on the water problem.'[73]

It was widely believed that after the PKK lost its training camps in Lebanon following the Israeli invasion in 1982, Syria helped the PKK militants with training under the supervision of Syrian officers and allowed the organisation to establish its headquarters within its territories where it directed PKK operations against Turkish targets.[74] During his trial Semdin Sakik, a senior PKK leader, who was captured in northern Iraq in 1998, revealed Syria's active support. 'Syria does not want peace in Turkey; its interests lie on

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[69]For the regional effects of the Gap project see, Erol Manisali, 'Water and Turkish-Middle East Relations', *International Journal of Turkish Studies,* vol. 6, nos. 1-2, (Winter 1992-94), pp. 169-70; Lutfu Sehsuvaroglu, *Su Barisi: Turkiye ve Ortadogu Su Politikalari,* (Istanbul: Gumusmotif, 1997), pp. 148-66.

[70]Muhammad Muslih, 'Syria and Turkey: Uneasy Relations' in *Reluctant Neighbour: Turkey's Role in the Middle East,* Henri J. Barkey (ed.), (Washington: US Institute of Peace Press, 1996), pp. 124-5.

[71]Kamer Kasim, *The Strategic Role of Turkey in the Middle East in the Post Cold War Era,* Unpublished MA Thesis, (Manchester: University of Manchester, 1996), p. 49.

[72]'Ozal: Teror Barajlarla Basladi', *Cumhuriyet,* 8 September 1992.

[73]*Milliyet*, 25 July 1996.

[74]One observer argued, 'without its Syrian safe house after 1980 the PKK would probably have never been resurrected as it was in 1984.' Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds in Turkey: A Political Dilemma,* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 126; Nihat Ali Ozcan, *PKK: Tarihi, Ideolojisi ve Yontemi,* (Ankara: ASAM, 1999), pp. 237-252; Sukru Elekdag, '2½ War Strategy', *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (March-May 1996), p. 46.

the continuation of the war; the headquarters of the war is in Syria.'[75] In addition, PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan also revealed details of Syrian support for his movement in February 1999.[76] Syria repeatedly denied Turkish claims that it sheltered and allowed the PKK to train in its territories. After the visits of the Turkish interior and foreign ministers to Damascus in 1992, relations between the two countries improved. Syria recognised the PKK to be an illegal organisation and agreed to cooperate with Lebanon to eradicate the terrorist camps in the Bekaa Valley. In return, Turkey guaranteed to continue to release sufficient amounts of water from the Euphrates.[77]

By 1998, although Turkey managed to gain a foothold in northern Iraq thanks to the ongoing cross-border incursions, it was Ankara's view that it would not be successful in its fight against the PKK as long as Syria continued to support the group. Thus, relations between Turkey and Syria deteriorated sharply and a sudden war between the two neighbours became a possibility.[78] Indeed, the Turkish chief of general staff went so far as to state that there was a state of undeclared war between Turkey and Syria.[79] Subsequently, Ankara demanded the extradition of the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan, and massed troops on the Syrian border. The crisis ended with an agreement whereby Syria declared that the PKK was an illegal party and promised not to give it any kind of support. Later, Ocalan left Syria and was eventually captured in Kenya in February 1999. Thus, Syria was effective in manipulating the PKK for its own advantage against Turkey. A strengthened PKK caused all kinds of problems for Turkey. In particular, it kept Turkey preoccupied with protecting its national security and social and political stability instead

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[75]Ergun Balci, 'Suriye Sorunu', *Cumhuriyet,* 11 September 1998. Hale, *op.cit.*, p. 680; Oya A. Mughisuddin, 'Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Ortadogu Ekseninde Turk Dis Politikasi: Etkenler ve Tercihler', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 2, no. 9, (May-June 1996), p. 261.

[76]*Milliyet,* 26 and 27 February 1999.

[77]'Interior Minister Sezgin in Syria', *Newspot,* 23 April 1992; Kaynak Acar, 'Stratejik Acidan Su Sorunu', *Strateji,* no. 3, (1995), p. 142.

[78]'Disisleri Bakani Ismail Cem: Suriye Hala Bir Sey Anlamiyor', *Hurriyet,* 6 October 1998; 'Suriye ile Savasirsak Ne Olur?' *Hurriyet,* 15 October 1998.

of allowing it its strategic interests and influence in the region.

Moreover, Syria was the chief architect of the efforts to isolate Turkey in the Muslim world in general and the Arab world in particular over both the water issue and more recently improved Turkish-Israeli military ties. As a senior Arab League official put it 'Turkey constitutes a threat to all Arab countries. Ankara should review its policy.'[80] This affected Turkey's interests in two ways. First of all, it harmed Turkey's friendly relations with some Arab states as Arab public opinion sympathised with Syria.[81] In this context, it also appeared as a possibility that Syria could act together on the issue with Iraq, which believed that Turkey betrayed it over the Gulf War.[82]

Secondly, Syria, again together with Iraq, managed to persuade many of the prospective international donors not to invest in the GAP project, which forced Turkey to rely on its own financial resources. The World Bank has rules, which exclude lending to a project involving a water dispute between riparian neighbours. Japan withdrew a US$600 million irrigation proposal for the same reasons.[83] Turkey thus received only US$3.6 billion in foreign credit, which fell far short of the US$32 billion needed to complete the project. Financial shortcomings (public investment as of 1999 amounted to only US$14 billion) therefore served to postpone the completion date of the project until 2020s rather than 2005 as previously hoped and according to official reports only 41 percent of the project had been completed by 1999.[84] This delayed long-standing regional development

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[79]Ergun Balci, 'Suriye ile Gerginlik', *Cumhuriyet,* 5 October 1998.

[80]'Arap Birligi Ankara'yi Sucladi', *Cumhuriyet,* 9 September 1992; *Anatolian News Agency, SWB,* EE/1848, 17 November 1993.

[81]Irfan C. Acar, *Dis Politika,* (Ankara: Sevinc, 1993), p. 59.

[82]*Cumhuriyet,* 7 February 1996; Mehmet Ali Birand, 'Turkiye'nin Basi Yakinda Derde Girecek', *Sabah,* 5 December 1996.

[83]'The Neighbours are Suspicious-The Biggest Project in the Mediterranean', *Financial Times,* 21 May 1992. Exceptionally, Britain later agreed to fund a project to build a dam within the Gap project. 'Turkish Dam May be Funded by UK', *The Independent,* 1 March 1999.

[84]*Status Report South-eastern Anatolia Project,* (Ankara: South-eastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, 2000); 'Gap'in 30 Yilda Sadece Yuzde 41'i Tamamlandi', *Hurriyet,* 20 September 1998; Murat Ozgokceler, 'GAP'in Gelecegi', *Strateji,* no. 3, (1995), p. 189.

projects within the framework of the GAP, which could have helped to alleviate the region's (mainly Kurdish) underdeveloped socio-economic structure, and even build up the overall prosperity of Turkey, eventually contributing to the eradication of the ongoing PKK terrorism.[85]

Furthermore, it should also be noted that Syria wanted to put Hatay, a province of Turkey and the former sanjak of Alexandretta that became part of Turkey in 1939, on the political agenda as the Syrian information minister explained, 'Hatay is a national issue we can never retract.'[86] Consequently, given Syria's stance on the PKK issue; its close military ties with Greece including landing rights in Syria for the Greek air force in case of a conflict with Turkey[87]; its territorial claims and its military capabilities including a non-conventional weapons programme, the Turkish National Security Policy Paper published in 1997 declared Syria (along with Greece) as a leading external threat.[88] Although Turkish-Syrian bilateral trade started to flourish in the late 1980s due to increasing diplomatic relations, the volume of trade only doubled from US$150 million in 1988 to US$330 million in 1991, while it reached a level of US$2 billion with Iraq over the same period.[89]

4.3. The Regional Arms race and nuclear proliferation: Living with the proliferators —Iran, Iraq, and Syria

The arms race and the proliferation of offensive missiles and weapons of mass

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[85]In some areas in eastern and south-eastern parts of Turkey per capita income is less than US$1000, well below the national average and far less than that in western parts of Turkey. *Milliyet*, 29 December 1998..

[86]*Zaman*, 20 October 1998; Robert Olson, 'The Kurdish Question and Turkey's Foreign Policy Toward Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf War' in *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East*, Robert Olson (ed.), (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996), p. 85

[87]See, 'Developments in Turkish-Greek relations: New rivalries, more tension', *Chapter Seven.*

[88]Lale Sariibrahimoglu, 'Arming For Peace' *Janes Defence Weekly*, 19 August 1998, p. 26.

[89]*Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1989* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1991); *Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1998). Although relations with Syria, in particular in the economic field, improved since Syrian support for the PKK declined in late 1998 and the two sides met to discuss the ways of strengthening bilateral relations for the first time in 12 years, as Turkish foreign minister noted, there are still several bilateral problems to be solved. Ismail Cem, *Turkey in the Twenty-first Century,* speech delivered at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 28 March 2001; *Anadolu Haber Ajansi,* 24 March 1999 and *Hurriyet*, 24 September 1999.

destruction (WMD) including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons has stood as one of the key security issues of the post-Cold War era in general and the Middle East in particular.[90] In this context, several Middle Eastern countries possess one or more types of WMD and have some form of ballistic missiles capability. From early 1990s, Turkey had been concerned that by the fact that its southern neighbours-Iraq, Iran and Syria- all developed these non-conventional arsenals as well as massive conventional capabilities.[91] This situation forced Turkey to continue spending significant sums on large-scale weaponisation programmes at the expense of a post-Cold War 'peace dividend'. Essentially, the huge military drain on its budget, coupled with the financial burden of the long-lasting battle against Kurdish separatism, made Turkey more dependent on foreign aid, and thus significantly limited its ability to play a greater role in international politics. This was clearly evidenced in Turkey's highly overrated relationship with the 'Turkic world' during the period in question. The strong initial euphoria did not go beyond sentimentalism and, what is more, the idea of a 'Turkish model' of economic development for the new republics was damaged when Ankara failed to meet the immense demands for financial aid and assistance demanded by these states.

In the post-Cold War era, the Middle East remained as one of the largest arms markets in the world.[92] The Gulf War in particular further fuelled the arms race most notably

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[90]Aaron Karp, *Ballistic Missile Proliferation: The Politics and Technics,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 16-9; Richard K. Betts, 'The New Threat of Mass Destruction', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 77, no. 1, (January-February 1998), pp. 27-40.

[91]Gulden Ayman and Nursin A. Guney, 'Degisen Uluslararasi Kosullarda Strateji, Turkiye ve Komsulari' in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi,* Second Edition, (Istanbul: Der, 1998), p. 434.

[92]In 1996 alone, it is estimated that arms sales to the region accounted for 40 percent of the global arms trade. *The Military Balance 1997-98,* (London: IISS, 1997), p. 118. For further reading on origins and dynamics of the arms race in the region see, Keith B. Payne, 'Post-Cold War Deterrence and Missile Defence', *Orbis,* (Spring 1995), p. 201; Yavuz G. Yildiz, 'Ortadogu'da Silahlanma ve Militarism' in *Su Sorunu, Turkiye ve Ortadogu,* Sabahattin Sen (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1993), p. 171; Asim Arar, 'Kimyasal Silahlar Sozlesmesi', *Dis Politika,* vol. 5, no. 3, (April 1994), p. 155; Hugh Beach, *Arms Control Today,* (London: Brassey's, 1992), pp. 20-1; Geoffrey Kemp, *The Control of the Middle East Arms Race,* 1991, pp. 71-2; Wallace J. Thies, 'Rethinking the New World Order', *Orbis,* vol. 38, no. 4, (Fall 1994), p. 625; Lawrance Freedman, 'The "Proliferation Problem" and the New World Order' in *Non-Conventional Weapons Proliferation in the Middle East,* E. Karsh, S. Navias and P. Sabin (eds.), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 172-7; Geoffrey Kemp, 'The Middle East Arms Race: Can it be

among the Gulf nations as they increased defence budgets considerably in the face of the Iraqi and Iranian threat.[93] Furthermore, the absence of real arms control agreements and confidence and security-building regimes made the Middle East even more dangerous, and, as noted by the Turkish foreign minister Hikmet Cetin in 1992, this made the efforts to have an environment of trust almost impossible to achieve.[94]

Iran and Iraq modified and copied missiles that they acquired from developed countries and obtained production capabilities.[95] For example, Iran deployed 150 Scud-B missiles with a range of 320-340 km, and in the early 1990s around 200 North Korean-built Scud-C missiles were deployed with a range of 500-600 km. It was also reported that Iran had produced the Iran missile with a range of 130-200 km,[96] and had successfully tested a 1400-km-range Shahab-3 missile, which would enable Iran to strike Israel, Saudi Arabia, most of Turkey and part of Russia, while it started developing the next generation of Shahab-4 missile with a range of 2000 km.[97] The same is true for Syria: It was widely believed that Syria had one of the largest arsenals of surface-to-surface missiles in the Middle East, including hundreds of Scud missiles that could carry nuclear or chemical payloads.[98] In the late 1980s, Syria deployed a combined total of approximately 300 missiles including the $Frog_7$ (a range of 70 km), SS_{21} (120 km), Scud-B and Scud-C with

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Controlled', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 45, no. 3, (Summer 1991), p. 449.

[93]Anthony H. Cordesman, 'After the Gulf War: The World Arms Trade and its Arms Races in the 1990s' in *RUSI and Brasseys's Defence Year Book 1992,* (London and Virginia: Brassey's, 1992), p. 208; *SIPRI Year Book 1998,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 196; Efraim Karsh, 'Reflections on the 1990-91 Gulf Conflict', *The Journal of Strategic Studies,* vol. 19, no. 3, (September 1996), pp. 318-9.

[94]Duygu B. Sezer, 'Turkey's New Security Environment, Nuclear Weapons and Proliferation', *Comparative Strategy,* vol. 14, no. 2, (April-June 1995), p.166; 'Foreign Minister Cetin Attends Middle East Peace Conference', *Newspot,* 10 January 1992.

[95]Muammer Simsek, 'Defense Industry in Turkey', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 15, nos. 1-2, (1991), p. 39; Erdogan Oznal, *Degisen Dunya Dengeleri ve Turkiye'nin Jeo-Stratejik Onemi,* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Baskanligi, 1992), pp. 26-32.

[96]Martin S. Navias, *Going Ballistic: The Build-up of Missiles in the Middle East,* (London and New York: Brassey's, 1994), pp. 24-5; Bill Gertz, 'Russia, China Aid Iran's Missile Program', *Washington Times,* 9 October 1997.

[97]'Iran Missile Tests Puts Israel in Range, Says US', *The Daily Telegraph,* 24 July 1998; *The Economist,* 6 June 1998; Andrew Koch, 'Iran's Attempt to Go Ballistic: A Status Report', *Weekly Defence Monitor,* 8 January 1998.

[98]'Syria: Missile Development', *The Risk Report,* vol. 3, no. 2 (March-April 1997).

conventional and chemical warheads and were in the process of developing the M-9 (500 km). It was believed that Syria's combined total missile deployment was no less than 1000 during the period in question.[99] According to Turkish officials, Syria deployed missile sites as close as 70 km away from the Turkish borders.[100] Iraq, on the other hand, before the Gulf conflict, deployed hundreds of missiles of different types with chemical and conventional warheads as well as Al-Husayn (600 km) (modified Scud-B) and Al-Abbas (900 km) and tested Al-Tammuz (1800 km). It was also believed that during this time Iraq was intent upon developing nuclear warhead.[101]

During the Gulf conflict two Patriot missiles were deployed near the Iraqi-Turkish border against possible Iraqi Scuds. This highlighted the weakness of Turkey's air defence system and prompted the defence minister to declare that Turkey must be prepared against the ever-improving defence system and ballistic missile capability of its southern and south-eastern neighbours': 'Our short-term goal is to purchase defence systems.'[102] The issue of the missile threat from neighbouring countries also helped highlight the fact that Turkey did not have any medium or long-range missile capability and relied on 120 MGM-140 Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) missiles with a range of 160 km and some other short-range battlefield ballistic missiles with a 50-100 km range.[103] In order to reduce this disparity and increase its combat capability Ankara signed an agreement with China to produce medium-range WS-1 missiles at a cost of US$150 million. It also purchased medium-range air-to-air AMRAAM, surface-to-surface ATACMS missiles from the US and received medium-range Ihawk missiles from

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[99]http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/missile/summary.htm.

[100]*Milliyet,* 15 September 1997.

[101]Navias, *op.cit.,* pp. 21-2 and pp. 30-1.

[102]'Suriye'nin Scud'lari Turkiye'yi Tehdit Ediyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 13 March 1992; *Aksam*, 14 April 1999.

[103]'750 Bin Kisilik Turk Ordusunun Atis Mesafesi 50-100 km', *Nokta,* 8-12 August 1998, p. 60; Duncan Lennox, 'Offensive Weapons, Turkey', *Jane's Strategic Weapons Systems,* Issue 24, May 1997.

France.[104]

Moreover, Iraq, Iran and Syria all aspired to be nuclear powers and achieved significant successes in biological and, particularly, chemical weapons technology.[105] Syria, in particular, had a long declared intention of achieving strategic parity with Israel,[106] and according to the Monterey Institute Centre for Non-Proliferation Studies, Syria had the largest and most advanced chemicals weapons capability in the Middle East. It also had a limited biotechnology infrastructure that could support a basic biological warfare effort.[107] As for nuclear weapon technology, Syria sought closer relations with China and Russia on the issue and was reported to have concluded deals with China and North Korea on missiles and advanced weapons systems.[108] In 1998, it was also reported that Syria and Russia signed an agreement on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.[109] Iran, on the other hand, was able to employ chemical weapons and its biological warfare programme was believed to be generally in the advanced research and development phase.[110] As for nuclear weapon technology, Iran had been building up its own nuclear capability for several decades and[111] with Russian assistance in particular had been making significant advances.[112]

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[104]*Hurriyet,* 20 December 1996; *Milliyet*, 31 January 1996; *Milliyet*, 10 January 1997; *Cumhuriyet,* 17 March 1997.

[105]No evidence suggests that Turkey had a nuclear, chemical or biological weapons programme. http://cns.miis.edu/research/wmdme/turkey.htm.

[106]Mohammad K. Mustafa, 'Political Framework and Prospects for Arms Control in the Middle East' in *Arms Control and Security in the Middle East and the CIS Republics'*, Theodore A. Couloumbis and Thanos P. Dokos (eds.), (Athens: Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, 1995), p. 155.

[107]See, http://cns.miis.edu/research/wmdme.

[108]Gulden Ayman, 'Orta Dogu'da Silahlarin Denetimi' in *Su Sorunu, Turkiye ve Ortadogu,* Sabahattin Sen (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1993), p. 236; Aharon Levran, *Israeli Strategy after Desert Storm: Lessons of the Second Gulf War,* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), pp. 107-8; Spector Leonards, 'Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East: The Next Chapter Begins' in *Non-Conventional Weapons Proliferation in the Middle East,* E. Karsh, S. Navias and P. Sabin (eds.), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 145-7.

[109]http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/syria/index.html.

[110]For an extensive research on WMDs in the Middle East see, http://cns.miis.edu/research/wmdme.

[111]For the Iranian efforts to possess and develop nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons see, *The Economist,* 14 March 1998; Shahram Chubin, 'Does Iran Want Nuclear Weapons?', *Survival,* vol. 37, no. 1, (Spring 1995), pp. 86-9. W. Seth Carus, 'Iranian Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons: Implications and Responses', *Middle East Review of International Affairs,* vol. 2, no. 1, (March 1998).

[112]'Iran, Russia Agree on US$800 Million Nuclear Plant Deal', *Washington Post*, 9 January 1995.

Given this threat, Turkey was unable to rely on NATO alone and was bound to provide for its own security arrangements, which necessitated increased defence expenditures. Essentially therefore, despite its poor economic performance, high inflation, large budget deficits and deep-seated social, political and economic problems, Turkey still felt obliged to allocate a significant part of its resources to military defence expenditure in the first decade following the end of the Cold War and over the period remained one of the leading arms importing countries in the world. For example, in 1994, it was the sixth-largest arms importer in the world though in terms of GNP per capita it ranked 78th[113]. In this context, with the exception of Greece, Turkey was the only NATO country not to have cut its military spending in the post-Soviet era (relative to the GDP it fell to 2.7 percent among NATO countries while it remained 4.4 percent in Turkey). Military spending was less than US$4 billion in 1988, but amounted to more than US$6 billion in 1995 and almost US$10 billion in 1999 (the highest ratio as a percentage of GDP of any NATO members with the exception of Greece and the US).[114]

In addition to the 10-year modernisation programme of the national defence industry introduced in 1985, Turkey also launched a massive 30 year modernisation programme of the armed forces at the cost of US$150 billion commencing in 1996.[115] This included, for example, the modernisation of the air defences through procurement of 240 F-16s, 145 attack helicopters and the production of 1,000 tanks.[116] Additionally (as will be discussed later in this study) Turkey concluded military agreements with Israel in 1996, which included the upgrading of Turkey's fleet of US-made F-4 and F-5 fighter planes by Israel.

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[113]Selami Sezgin and Julide Yildirim, 'The Demand for Turkish Defence Expenditure', *Defence and Peace Economics*, vol. 13, no. 12 (2002), pp. 121-2; *Sabah*, 5 July 1996.

[114]*SIPRI Year Book 1997*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 195 and p. 201; *SIPRI Year Book 2001*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 281 and p. 287.

[115]Vural Avar, 'The Turkish Armed Forces in 2000 and Beyond' in *NATO's Sixteen Nations*,(1998), pp. 15-23.

[116]Gulay G. Senesen, 'Turk Silahli Kuvvetlerinin Modernizasyon Programinin Bir Degerlendirmesi', in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi*, Faruk Soylemezoglu (ed.), Second Edition, (Istanbul: Der, 1998), p. 586;

It was also reported that following Iran's successful missile test and Syria's growing missile potential, Turkey and Israel agreed to jointly invest in missile production.[117] Turkish and Israeli officials also agreed to jointly produce 500 km-range Patriot-type Arrow missiles and reached an agreement on Popeye-1 type missiles to be produced in Turkey.[118] The two countries also planned to co-produce Popeye-2 missiles with a 350 km range.[119] From a Turkish perspective, the strategic relationship with Israel can be seen, in part, as Turkey's attempt to balance the military capabilities of its southern Arab neighbours.

4.4. Turkish-Israeli relations: A 'strategic partnership'?

Turkey's generally poor relationship with the Muslim Arab world especially their direct/indirect support for Kurdish separatists and clashes over water all proved to Turkey that it was facing an ever-growing threat from its immediate neighbours. These factors, as well as Turkey's growing isolation from Europe, played a significant role in Ankara's decision to review its Middle Eastern policies and to look for new alliances in the region. In the words of general Cevik Bir, deputy chief of the Turkish General Staff and one of the main architects of Turkish-Israeli military relations, 'new threats that emerged after the Cold War led Turkey to become a "strategy-producing" country. The initiation of Turkish-Israeli relations should be seen in this light.'[120]

In fact, the political basis for rising relations between the two countries had always existed. Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognise the new state of Israel in 1949 and throughout the 1950s Turkey's pro-Western standing in the region eased the development of cordial relations. However, Turkey's expanding relations with the Arab

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Guney, *op.cit.*, p. 5; *Turkiye*, 22 September 1999.

[117]'Ortadogu'da Fuze Krizi', *Nokta*, 2-8 August 1998, pp. 58-60

[118]*Milliyet*, 25 December 1997.

[119]'Turkiye'ye Israil Fuzesi', *Sabah*, 13 May 1999; *Sabah*, 4 August 1999.

[120]Cevik Bir, *Reflections on Turkish-Israeli Relation and Turkish Security*, Speech delivered at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 26 October1999.

world from the late 1960s came at the expense of the Turkish-Israeli ties and, from this date until the late 1980s, this meant that Turkey became increasingly more responsive to the Arab cause.[121] Nevertheless, Turkish-Israeli relations never completely broke down and witnessed a significant expansion of bilateral relations following the historic Arab-Israeli Oslo peace process, by way of high-level visits, trade and military agreements culminating in a 'strategic partnership'.[122]

The signing of the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles in 1993 removed, from Ankara's perspective, the obstacles in the way of improving bilateral relations.[123] Moreover, regional and international developments such as the normalisation of diplomatic relations between Israel and a number of states as well as the Gulf War of 1991, which for the first time brought both Arabs and Israelis together on the same side against Iraq, all became key reasons in Turkey's decision to upgrade links with Israel.[124] In addition to this suitable international environment, several other factors also combined to encourage Turkey to foster close relations with Israel. Primarily, both sides shared some common features and views on a number of regional issues.[125] They were both pro-Western, had close ties to the US, committed to democratic and secular values, they had

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[121]Aysegul Sever, 'The Arab-Israeli Peace Process and Turkey since the 1995 Interim Agreement', *Turkish Review of Middle East Studies,* no. 9, (Annual 1996-97), p. 122. For the history of bilateral relations see, Bulent Aras, *Filistin-Israil Baris Sureci ve Turkiye,* (Istanbul: Baglam, 1997), pp. 130-44; Gulnur Aybet, 'Turkey in its Geo-Strategic Environment' in *Rusi and Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1992,* (London: RUSI, 1992), pp. 99-100.

[122]So much so that, according to Efraim Inbar of Bar Ilan University, the new relationship was mostly the result of Turkish initiatives, although the Israeli government actively welcomed the approachment of such an important non-Arab Muslim state and regional power. Efraim Inbar, *The Israeli-Turkish Entente,* (London: King's College London Mediterranean Studies, 2001), pp. 24-5.

[123]See, Sule Kut, 'Filistin Sorunu ve Turkiye' in *Ortadogu Sorunlari ve Turkiye,* Haluk Ulman (ed.), (Istanbul: TUSES, 1991), pp. 28-30.

[124]Suha Bolukbasi, 'Turkiye ve Israil: Mesafeli Yakinliktan Stratejik Ortakliga', *Liberal Dusunce,* vol. 4, no.3, (Winter 1999).

[125]For example, Efraim Inbar, director of Bar-Ilan University's Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, criticised Europe over its double standard on the human rights issue. 'While they turn a blind eye to brutal conducts of the dictators and authoritarian regimes of the Arab world, they aggressively criticise Turkey and Israel on their human rights records in the struggle they encounter with terrorism. It seemed that Israel and Turkey are paying the price of not being a Christian nation. It is still a sin in the eyes of Europe being Jewish and not having oil.' Efraim Inbar, 'Dogu Akdeniz'de AB-ABD cekismesi', *Zaman,* 8 June 1999.

similar views regarding terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism, they also shared a common enmities with Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Perhaps most importantly, Israel and Turkey shared a 'common sense of otherness' in a region dominated by Arab and non-democratic regimes.[126]

In fact, after the Madrid conference of 1991 Ankara's decision to raise the level of the diplomatic relations to embassy status underlined Turkey's readiness to improve its ties with Israel.[127] The Turkish tourism minister's visit in 1992 marked the first official visit to Israel by a Turkish cabinet minister in almost three decades and started the process of normalisation of bilateral relations. The relationship further intensified with the visit of the Turkish foreign minister, which similarly marked Turkey's first-ever foreign ministerial visit to Israel in 1993, and the Turkish prime minister who visited Israel for the first time in 1994. This was followed by a visit by the Turkish president in 1996 and the first ever visit by a Turkish chief of staff in 1997.[128]

Ankara's motivations for improving relations with Israel were manifold. Firstly, as discussed earlier, Turkey's loss of its strategic role as a Cold War bulwark against the former Soviet Union continued with the rejection of its application for membership of the EU led it to fear marginalisation within the new European economic and political system. This fear of isolation, however, served to encourage Turkey to speed up the process of forging relations with Israel. As such, following the Luxembourg EU summit of 1997, which virtually ended Turkey's hopes for EU membership in the foreseeable future, prime minister Yilmaz immediately set out to demonstrate that if Turkey did not have friends in

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[126]Alan Makovsky, 'Israeli-Turkish Relations; A Turkish "Periphery Strategy"?' in *Reluctant Neighbour: Turkey's Role in the Middle East,* Henri J. Barkey (ed.), (Washington: US Institute of Peace Press, 1996), pp. 167-8;

[127]George E. Gruen, 'Dynamic Progress in Turkish-Israeli Relations', *Israel Affairs,* vol. 1, no. 4, (Summer 1995), p. 51.

[128]In the same time way, the Israeli president and then the Israeli foreign minister visited Turkey. 'Israeli President Ezer Weizman Visits Turkey', *Newspot,* 28 January 1994 and 'Shimon Perez in Turkey', *Newspot,* 21 April 1994; *Cumhuriyet*, 26 February 1997.

Brussels, it had powerful friends elsewhere and referred to the Turkish-Israeli 'strategic partnership' in this context.[129]

Secondly, shared concerns over terrorism and security threats from Iraq, Iran and, particularly, Syria brought the two states closer.[130] Thus, on his visit to Israel in 1996, president Demirel highlighted terrorism as one of the main problems in the region and named Syria as a country that provided refuge to terrorists.[131] In this context, Turkey received full support from Israel in its struggle against terrorists, most notably the PKK. Ankara was even assured by the Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres that a peace deal between Syria and Israel would not be signed unless Damascus's support for terrorist organisations was 'completely severed'.[132] According to general Cevik Bir, then the deputy chief of the Turkish General Staff, this policy eventually paid a quick dividend following Ocalan's departure from Syria. 'The military agreement signed between Turkey and Israel paved the way for resolution of the Turkish-Syrian crisis of autumn 1998. Syria's more responsive attitude toward Turkey since then proves that the Turkish-Israeli agreement works.'[133] Additionally, as will be discussed in the coming chapter, it was widely accepted that Turkey's other internal threat, the rise of political Islam represented by the Refah Party's increasing anti-secular policies in domestic and foreign affairs, was another big issue that led the government and, in particular, the army to step up the process of developing relations with Israel (especially during the Refah government).[134]

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[129]Gil Dibner, 'My Enemy's Enemy: Turkey, Israel, and the Middle Eastern Balance of Power', *Harvard International Review*, vol. 21, no. 1, (Winter 1998-99).

[130]Sever, *op.cit.*, p. 125; 'Filistin'i Nasil Bir Gelecek Bekliyor?', *Nokta,* 15 August 1998, pp. 66-7.

[131]*Turkish Daily News,* 11 March 1996; William Safire, 'Israel and Turkey as Partners', *International Herald Tribune,* 26 May 1996.

[132]*Turkish Daily News,* 16 January 1996; Efraim Inbar, 'Turkey Deserves Israel's Support', *The Jerusalem Post,* 19 October 1998.

[133]Bir, *op.cit.*

[134]Bolukbasi, *op.cit.*; Meliha Benli Altunisik, 'Turkish Policy toward Israel' in *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy,* Makovsky, Alan and Sayari, Sabri (eds), (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 68; Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the end of the Cold War,* (London: C. Hurst&Co, 2003), p. 384.

Turkey's fostering of close relations with Israel was also partly a response to the fact that it could not get any real political support for issues like Cyprus from the Arab world, despite its constant support for the Palestinian cause. Indeed, no Arab country recognised the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus following its declaration of independence in 1983, and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) did not grand anything more than that of observer status.[135] Again, although Turkey had a strong position within the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), with the inclusion of the Turkic republics, it was not able to persuade Iran to include the TRNC in the forum.[136] Moreover, some of the Arab nations allied themselves with countries that Turkey had already been engaged in conflict with. Syria looked to develop closer military ties with Greece and tried to form a front in the Arab world against Turkey on the water issue. Iran supported Armenia, as witnessed during the Azeri-Armenian war, and was perceived as a major threat to the secular regime in Turkey. In the face of criticism coming from Arab countries over the Turkish-Israeli ties, Sami Kohen, a columnist for the Turkish daily *Milliyet* on foreign affairs, wrote,

> They (the Arabs) recall that for many years Turkey had frozen its relations with Israel partly because Arab countries demanded that. But these countries, rather than supporting Turkey, had taken a stance against Turkey, with Syria harbouring the PKK and joining hands with Iraq to launch a campaign against Turkey on the water issue. Iran too has supported both the PKK and the fundamentalists. The current improvement in Turco-Israeli relations is the outcome of the stance some Arab countries have taken against Turkey, the spot reached today is not a 'cause' but an 'effect.'[137]

Also, with regard to the water problem in the Middle East, Turkey's strategic interests drove it to improve its existing relations with Israel.[138] Moreover, as noted by a senior

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[135]Kut, 'Filistin', *op.cit.*, p. 31.

[136]'Turkiler de Ekonomik Isbirligi Orgutunde', *Cumhuriyet,* 7 February 1992.

[137]*Milliyet,* 9 May 1997.

[138]Sertoglu noted, 'in any kind of negotiations on the water issue Turkey would need allies to support its case on the table where Iran, Iraq and Syria act together. Israel's importance comes out at this point because it neither has territorial claims (like Syria) over Turkey nor is a threat to the secular democratic regime (Iran) in Turkey.' Besides it has a water problem with Jordan. Sedat Sertoglu, 'Yeni Dunya Duzeninde Ortadogu ve Turkiye' in *Yeni Dunya Duzeni ve Turkiye,* Sabahattin Sen (ed.), 1992, (Istanbul:

Turkish diplomat, in view of the rapidly developing armament programmes of both Syria and Iran with advanced military capabilities with conventional and non-conventional arms, relations with Israel were considered a deterrent against both neighbours, which would also change the regional balance in favour of Turkey.[139] At the same time, the rapprochement with Israel allowed the army to acquire arms and technology from Israel, which it could never have hoped to obtain from Europe or the US because of Turkey's human rights record and its conflict with Greece. Washington had already showed a reluctance to supply Turkey with arms in the face of domestic opposition as a result of lobbying by human rights, arms control groups and the Greek and Armenian lobbies.[140] A senior member of the Turkish general staff warned the US administration that 'it would be quite normal for us to invest our money in other countries where we are sure that there will be no restrictions on weapon system transfers.'[141] This resulted in the signing of a US$590 million deal with Israel to upgrade Turkey's fleet of American-made F-4 fighter planes.[142] Later, Ankara also awarded a US$75 million contract to Israel to upgrade its F-5 fighters over a French bid in protest at the EU's Luxembourg summit.[143] It was later reported that Israel concluded a deal with Turkey to provide US-Israeli joint production of Patriot-type Arrow missiles and agreed on the development of joint cooperation in satellite technology.[144] All this has been underpinned by military agreements signed in February and August 1996 (Israel's first-ever formal military link to a Muslim country) which provided for joint air and naval exercises, access to port facilities, access to each other's military academies and headquarters, and exchange of military information,

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Baglam, 1992), p. 147.

[139]Sukru Elekdag, 'Israil Ile Yakinlasma', *Milliyet,* 2 June 1998.

[140]Interview with professor Hasan Koni of Ankara University, *Aksiyon,* 10 January 1998; Gresh, *op.cit.*, p. 191.

[141]Quoted in Thomas Valasek, 'Turkey's Military Modernization Program', *Magazine of German-Armenian Society,* (July 1999); Kemal Kirisci, 'Turkey and the United States: Ambivalent Allies', *MERIA,* vol. 2, no. 4, (November 1998).

[142]*The Daily Telegraph,* 16 September 1997.

expertise, and personnel.[145]

Furthermore, Ankara also hoped that its wide-ranging strategic partnership with Israel would improve Turkey's image in Washington and could gain strong support from the US administration and Congress, and the supporters of Israel in Congress did work for Ankara in the US capital.[146] Prime minister Yilmaz in his speech before the leaders of the US Jewish community drew attention to this, and called the Jewish communities both inside and outside the US as the 'unofficial ambassadors of Turkey'.[147] Moreover, good relations with Israel paid a handsome dividend for Turkey in its efforts to integrate into Europe. Israeli diplomats were very active in support of Turkey's bid to have its customs union agreement with the EU ratified by the European Parliament in 1995. Furthermore, Israeli prime minister Peres personally lobbied European leaders on Turkey's behalf in 1996.[148]

Finally, economic factors played a significant role. Turkey's trade with Arab countries decreased significantly in the 1980s and 1990s due to loss of the Iraqi market and the general economic situation in the Middle East. This, in turn, turned Turkey's eyes towards alternative markets and other developed countries including Israel. In 1995, exports to Islamic countries accounted for less than 14 percent of total Turkish exports; this is in stark contrast to its highest point of 48 per cent in 1982.[149] In the wake of the visit by Demirel to Israel in 1996, a free trade agreement was signed making Turkey the only country with which Israel had signed such an agreement other than the US.[150] Although

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[143]*The Daily Telegraph,* 3 January 1998.

[144]'Turkiye'ye Israil Fuzesi', *Sabah,* 13 May 1999; *Hurriyet*, 18 November 1999.

[145]*Turkish Daily News,* 12 April 1996; *Cumhuriyet,* 29 August 1996.

[146]Hasan Koni, speech given on *US-Turkish Relations in the Post Cold-War Era: The Ankara Perspective,* at Center for Strategic and International Studies, 12 September 2000.

[147]*Yeni Safak,* 20 December 1997.

[148]Makovsky, *op.cit.*, p. 154.

[149]*Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1982* (Ankara: DIE, 1984), p. 11 and *Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri 1995* (Ankara: DIE, 1997), pp. 28-9; For a comparative analysis of Turkey's export orientation and its trade partners see, Turan Aydin, 'Turkey's Rising Economic Capacity', *Perceptions,* vol. 1, no. 3, (September-November 1996), pp. 137-154.

[150]*Turkey Today,* (March-April 1996); *Anadolu Haber Ajansi*, 21 December 1999.

trade volume between two countries was more than half a billion dollars in 1996, this reached almost US$1 billion (US$885 million, Turkish exports accounted for US$585 million) in 1999, making Israel a leading Middle Eastern market for Turkish goods.[151] In addition, 300-400,000 Israeli tourists visited Turkey every year making it the second most popular destination after the US, and they spent another half a billion dollars, a significant boost to Turkish tourism revenues.[152]

From an Israeli perspective, cooperating with Turkey within its 'periphery strategy' represented the most viable opportunity to realise its objective of improving ties with the Muslim world.[153] By improving relations with Turkey, Israel helped to guarantee its water needs in the event of severe shortages. Close ties to Turkey also brought foreign earnings through the selling of arms and technology.[154] In addition, in view of the matching mutual economic interests, Turkey could ensure Israel's access to the growing markets of the newly-independent Central Asian republics, and in fact the two countries agreed to extend existing trade relations to Central Asian republics by way of joint investment programmes.[155] Also, in strategic terms, the use of Turkish airspace for pilot training was highly beneficial to the Israeli air force.[156] As the Israeli ambassador to Ankara Uri Bar-Nir noted in 2001, Turkey became the second-most important country for Israel in the world (after the US).[157]

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[151] *Temel Ekonomik Gostergeler Haziran 2001,* T.C. Basbakanlik DPT.

[152] *Turkiye-Israil Iliskileri,* Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 July 1997.

[153] Makovsky, *op.cit.,* pp. 167-8. According to Efraim Inbar, surely this was the most beneficial regional development for Israel since the Egyptian president Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977. Efraim Inbar, 'Israel's Strategic Environment in the 1990s', *The Journal of Strategic Studies,* vol. 25, no. 1, (March 2002), p. 28.

[154] Mehmet. Ali Birand, 'Turk-Israil Iliskileri En Cok Kime Yarayacak?', *Sabah,* 29 May 1997.

[155] Uri Bar-Ner, 'Turkiye-Israil Iliskileri ve Bolgesel Istikrar', *Zaman,* 28 July 1998.

[156] Neill Lochery, 'Israel and Turkey: Deepening Ties and Strategic Implications, 1985-98', *Israel Affairs,* vol. 5, no. 1, (Autumn 1998), p. 46.

[157] Barry Rubin, 'Turkish-Jewish Friendship over 500 Years', *Jerusalem Post* , 11 July 2001.

Although Turkey benefited from the strategic partnership (most notably regarding Syrian support for PKK terrorists), its close military ties with Israel faced wide criticism from the Muslim world and also created some uneasiness among certain parts of the Turkish public, particularly at times of deadlock in Arab-Israeli peace process. Indeed, the new political and military alliance between Israel and Turkey, with the strong encouragement of the US, foamed Arab fear on the changing balance of power in the Middle East despite assurances from Turkey. In the words of president Demirel, 'our relations with Israel are bilateral ties based on the mutual interests of the two countries. These ties are not aimed at any third country.'[158] 'We have nothing to say against normal relations between Turkey and Israel; but when it comes to a discussion of a strategic or military alliance between those two countries, of course we continue to have concerns' said one Arab diplomat.[159] Similarly, the Arab League criticised the Turkish-Israeli alignment as 'a hostile pact' in the region and a threat to the national interests of the Arab world.[160] The Syrian vice-president Khaddam described the Turkish-Israeli alliance as 'the greatest threat to the Arabs since Israel was created.'[161] The joint Israeli, Turkish and American maritime manoeuvres (though restricted to humanitarian training) that took place in early 1998 and late 1999 further confirmed Arab suspicions, with Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Iran denouncing the exercises.[162]

Damascus backed by Iraq urged the Arab League and the OIC to pass tougher resolutions condemning Turkey and mobilized other Arab countries and Iran to form a 'counter alliance' to balance the Turkish-Israeli axis. In this context, Syria, Egypt and

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[158] *Turkish Daily News,* 14 July 1999; 'Arap Birligi'nden Sam Agzi', *Zaman,* 17 September 1998; *Turkish Daily News,* 12 April 1996; interview with the Israeli president Ezer Weizman, 'Isbirliginin Amaci "Baris"', *Milliyet,* 30 October 1998; Interview with the Jordanian prince 'Israil ile Iliskilerinizi Iyi Izah Edin', *Zaman,* 30 October 1998.

[159] *Turkish Probe,* 29 March 1998.

[160] *Turkish Daily News,* 18 June 1997.

[161] Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, 'International, Regional and Palestinian Affairs', *Middle East Contemporary Survey,* vol. 21, (1997), p. 118.

Saudi Arabia strengthened their strategic relationships with each other.[163] Furthermore, close ties between Turkey and Israel led to a partial rapprochement between Syria and Iraq (at odds for some 30 years) as one common border reopened in 1997 followed by the reopening of an important oil pipeline that had been closed since 1982.[164] Iran, which also felt threatened by the accord, blamed Ankara for letting its territory be used as Israel's backyard and stated that Israeli specialists may have been monitoring the Iranian border from Turkey.[165]

It is clear that Ankara's advanced military relationship with Israel intensified historical Arab mistrust of Turkey. In the face of severe criticism over Turkish-Israeli relations at the meeting of the OIC in Tehran in December 1997, which coincided with the Israeli defence minister's official visit to Ankara and Turkish military incursion in northern Iraq, president Demirel was forced to leave the conference early.[166] Needless to say, Turkey's inability to explain its ties to Israel was exploited by extremist political forces at home. For example, Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the pro-Islamist Refah Party, argued, 'see how miserable they (the president and the prime minister) are. They are being kicked out of both Europe and the Islamic Conference at the same time.'[167]

According to other critics, although Turkey's political relations with the Middle Eastern Arab countries were not ideal for some time and in many cases the fault hardly lies with Ankara, nonetheless, Turkey should have paid more respect to the religious and

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[162]*The Daily Telegraph,* 8 January 1998.

[163]Hasmet Akyuz, 'Degisen Dengelerin Odaginda Turkiye', *Silahli Kuvvetler Dergisi,* vol. 120, no. 367, (January 2001), p. 68 and p. 70; Kemal Kirisci, 'Ortadogu'nun Barisla Raksi', *Zaman,* 3 August 1999; Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, *op.cit.*, pp. 118-9.

[164]Lochery, *op.cit.*, p. 53 and p. 55.

[165]Bulent Aras, 'Turkish-Israeli-Iranian Relations in the Nineties: Impact on the Middle East', *Middle East Policy,* vol. 7, no. 3, (June 2000), p. 154; Huseyin Aykol, *Ortadogu Denkleminde Israil-Turkiye Iliskileri,* (Ankara: Oteki, 1998), pp. 19-22.

[166]'Iki Dunya Arasinda Derin Yalnizlik', *Aksiyon,* 20-26 December 1997, pp. 22-31.

[167]*Hurriyet*, 17 December 1997.

historical ties with the Arab world and refrained alienating this block all together.[168] They also argued that Turkey should have kept a low profile with regard to the relationship with Israel rather than making it a core aspect of its Middle East policy. However, critics generally accepted that Turkey had every right to pursue its own national interests and would not stop doing what was required just because the Arab countries disagreed.[169] For example, Ilnur Cevik, editor of the *Turkish Daily News,* wrote,

> Turkey has to further strengthen its links with Israel for its own supreme interests. Yet, while doing this Ankara cannot and should not hurt the delicate balances in the Middle East. The Turkish Foreign Ministry on the other hand also supports close links with Israel but feels this should be done in a professional manner and things should not be rushed. The Foreign Ministry is also aware that Turkey has to take into account Arab reservations and concerns while enhancing ties with Israel.[170]

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[168]Cengiz Candar, a leading analyst on foreign policy issues, argued 'nobody has a right to isolate Turkey in the region and the Muslim world, the most powerful and influential country of the area, by reducing its role only to Israel's strategic partner in the Middle East. *Aksiyon*, 26 December 1997, p. 28

[169]Sami Kohen, *Milliyet,* 9 May 1997.

[170]*Turkish Daily News*, 15 May 1997.

CHAPTER FIVE

TURKEY'S INTERNAL THREATS: PKK SEPERATISM AND THE RISE OF POLITICAL ISLAM

5.1. Turkey's hidden war: The Kurdish issue

The power vacuum in UN-protected northern Iraq that developed following the Gulf War enabled the establishment of a *de facto* Kurdish autonomous zone that fuelled PKK violence, particularly in the south-eastern part of Turkey. As Alexander Haig, a former US secretary of state, pointed out, 'the safe havens, established in northern Iraq, have averted the worst for the northern Iraq Kurds but not established security for peace. Instead the PKK has found a safe haven.'[1] Thus, PKK issue continued to remain as a serious national security threat to Turkey throughout the period under study.[2]

In addition to the domestic aspects of the issue, it presented an important impediment to Turkey's external relations in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia and also meant that Turkey could not concentrate on building strong economic and political relations with its neighbours Iraq, Iran and, most notably, Syria. The issue also became a political tool in the hands of some of those countries that had differences with Turkey such as Russia, Armenia, Greece, and to lesser extent Cyprus and Serbia. The matter also became an impediment to Ankara's historic goal of joining the EU in the context of its human rights violations and the state of democratic reforms.

Towards a Kurdish state in northern Iraq

Turkey was concerned that a Kurdish state in northern Iraq would have a direct influence on its own security[3], and would encourage Kurdish nationalists in Turkey in their quest for autonomy or independence in the mainly Kurdish part of the country or give momentum to the effort to include the eastern and south-eastern part of Turkey in a

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[1] *The Washington Times,* 25 June 1995.

[2] For the evolution of Kurdish nationalism and the PKK see, 'Economy-oriented foreign policies, 1980-1989', *Chapter One.*

[3] 'Ordu, Kurt Devletine Karsi', *Cumhuriyet,* 11 October 1992.

federation along with the Syrian and Iranian Kurdish-populated areas as a part of a 'greater Kurdistan'.[4] Turkey was also concerned that such a scenario would definitely increase instability in the region and could also endanger an estimated 2.5 million Turcomans living in northern Iraq. This, in turn, would force Turkey to intervene to protect them[5], especially as the Turcoman council, the highest decision-making organ of the Iraqi Turcoman Front, had claimed that their future depended on Turkish support.[6]

The Kurdish uprising and the massive exodus of Kurdish civilians in their attempt to escape from Saddam Hussein's brutal repression over Turkish and Iranian borders following the Gulf War of 1991, attracted the international community's attention, and the issue was, in turn, internationalised. The Kurdish political issue also brought a host of post-Cold War issues to the forefront of Middle Eastern concerns: the challenge of breakaway ethnic movements; human rights; the treatment of minorities; democracy; cultural autonomy and even the creation of new states out of existing territorial units.[7]

As such, the Gulf War further exacerbated the already chronic Kurdish issue in the Middle Eastern region, particularly for Turkey. There were several reasons for this. First of all, UN-controlled northern Iraq was home to various ethnic and religious groups with different political agendas with an estimated 250-300 political and military camps in the region.[8] Of these, the two main Kurdish groups, the Patriotic Union Kurdistan (PUK) and

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[4]Baskin Oran, *Kalkik Horoz: Cekic Guc ve Kurt Devleti,* (Istanbul: Bilgi, 1996), p. 187; Idris Bal, 'Ortadogu'da Istikrarsizliga Yol Acan Faktorler ve PKK'nin Katkisi' in *21. Yuzyilin Esiginde Turk Dis Politikasi*, Idris Bal (ed.), (Istanbul: Alfa, 2001), p. 707.

[5]Mahmut Bali Aykan, 'Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991-95', *Middle Eastern Studies,* vol. 32, no. 4, (October 1996), p. 352.

[6]*Cumhuriyet*, 12 September 1999.

[7]According to Fuller, 'for the first time in modern history, control over the Kurdish problem has slipped out of the grasp of all regional parties as Kurdish politics has taken on a momentum of its own.' Graham E. Fuller, 'The Fate of the Kurds', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 72, no. 2, (Spring 1993), p. 109; Kumru Baser, 'The Internalisation of Turkey's Kurdish Conflict', *Turkish Area Studies,* no. 51, (November 2000), pp. 13-4. For demographic distribution of the Kurdish population in the region see, Mehrdad R. Izady, 'The Kurdish Demographic Revolution and Its Socio-Political Implications' in *Contrast and Solutions in the Middle East,* Ole Hoiris and Sefa Martin Yurukel (eds.), (Aarhus C: Aarhus University Press, 1997), p. 484.

[8]'Sedat Aral, 'Dis Kurtler Ne Yapiyor?', *Nokta,* 26 April 1992.

the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), were deeply divided due to historic, tribal differences and political interest.[9] Indeed, the KDP-PUK coalition government formed following the election of the first parliament in Kurdish history in 1992 quickly ended and led to a civil war in 1994 in which more than 3,000 people were killed.[10]

Furthermore, another problem for Turkey in regard to Iraqi Kurds was that they sought protection from both Baghdad and each other. This made the issue more complicated and thereby involved regional actors such as Iran which had close ties with the PUK leader Jalal Talabani.[11] For example, the KDP, which had close ties with Iraq and Turkey, turned to Baghdad when the balance changed in favour of the PUK. This in turn prompted Baghdad to send 30,000 troops and 400 tanks to assist the KDP.[12] Similarly, in 1992, Iran bombed several camps in northern Iraq, which were believed to belong to groups opposed to the regime in Tehran.[13] Again, in July and October 1996, Iran launched massive operations in northern Iraq against the KDP forces in which 15,000 troops supported by tanks, heavy artillery and aircraft took part.[14] In effect, although the KDP and the PUK agreed to secure the Turco-Iraqi border in close co-operation with Turkey, the conditions were not helpful in this respect and Turkey was concerned by the fact that the PKK benefited from the ongoing instabilities.[15]

Ankara constantly denied that it had any designs on the region, that it supported a

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[9]See, Michael M. Gunter, 'The KDP-PUK Conflict in Northern Iraq', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 50, no. 2, (Spring 1996), pp. 239-40.

[10]*The Daily Telegraph,* 5 April 1995; 'Ilk Kurt Hukumeti', *Cumhuriyet,* 6 July 1992; K. Nezan, 'The Kurds: Current Position and Historical Background' in *Kurdish Culture and Identity,* P. Kreyenbroek and C. Allison (eds.), (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1996), pp. 17-8.

[11]Duygu B. Sezer, 'Turkiye'nin Irak Cikmazi', *Yeni Yuzyil,* 8 September 1996.

[12]*The Economist,* 7 September 1996.

[13]'Iran'dan Irak'a Sinir Otesi Hareket', *Cumhuriyet,* 7 April 1992.

[14]*Milliyet,* 31 July 1996 and 15 October 1996.

[15]'General Bitlis Meets Talabani and Barzani', *Newspot,* 19 November 1992. Talabani was later to admit that they made a number of alliances with the PKK and provided financial and moral support. *Milliyet,* 1 June 1999; Sukru Elekdag, 'Turkiye'nin Kuzey Irak'taki Hedefleri', *Milliyet,* 22 July 1996; *Cumhuriyet,* 21 November 1997.

unified Iraq and would not interfere with its territorial integrity.[16] As such, Ankara made it clear that it opposed any decision by the north Iraqi Kurds to establish a federal state as a unilateral decision that could lead to the partition of Iraq.[17] Turkey also held tripartite meetings with Iran and Syria in 1992 and 1994 in response to the KDP and the PUK agreements regarding the establishment of a Kurdish state, in which they agreed to oppose the partition of Iraq and the establishment of an independent Kurdish state. In a desire to normalise relations with Iraq in order to contain the Kurdish nationalist threat[18], Turkey, as well as Syria and Iran, approached Baghdad regarding the lifting of UN economic sanctions, and the reopening of the pipeline between Iraq and Turkey.[19] While Turkish premier Demirel argued that 'sanctions on Iraq should be lifted as soon as possible so that it is necessary for Iraq to play a part on international platforms.'[20]

Moreover Turkey chose to continue its interventions into northern Iraq, which began in the early 1980s as part of the security agreement signed with Iraq in 1984 for the 'hot pursuit' of the PKK terrorists. In fact, Turkey established a *de facto* security zone within northern Iraq, and hoped that these military incursions would both limit the PKK and fill the power vacuum in the area.[21] Ankara increased incursions in the second half of the 1990s in order to eradicate the PKK once and for all. For example, in 1998, the greatest

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[16]Turkish foreign minister stated 'our policy is the protection of territorial integrity, independence, sovereignty and the political unity of Iraq.' *Turkish Daily News,* 19 July 1997. Gulnur Aybet, 'Turkey in its Geo-Strategic Environment' in *Rusi and Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1992,* (London: RUSI, 1992), p. 102.

[17]'Kurt Devletine Hayir', '*Cumhuriyet,* 9 October 1992; 'Turkey Against Disintegration of Iraq', *Newspot,* 22 October 1992.

[18]See, Robert Olson, 'Turkey and Iraq: Toward Normalisation?', *Middle East International,* (7 August 1992), p. 19.

[19]For the tripartite meetings in 1992 and 1994 see a well elaborated article by Robert Olson, 'The Kurdish Question Four Years on: The Policies of Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq', *Middle East Policy,* vol. 3, no. 3, (1994), pp. 136-44; Uclu Zirve Irak'in Toprak Butunlugunden Yana', *Cumhuriyet,* 15 November 1992; 'Resolution on North Iraq', *Newspot,* 19 November 1992; Turkey-Iran-Syria Meeting', *Newspot,* 2 September 1994; Gunter, *op.cit.,* pp. 234-5.

[20] 'Sanctions on Iraq Should be Lifted', *Newspot,* 2 September 1994.

[21]Iraq rejected to renew the agreement in 1990 and in fact later it lost its authority in the region following the Gulf War. For the operations in northern Iraq since 1983 see, Oran, *op.cit.,* p. 38; Turk Ordusu Irak Iclerine 15 km Ilerledi', *Cumhuriyet,* 30 October 1992.

offensive ever against the PKK took place with around 50,000 troops backed by tanks, helicopter gun ships, and fighter jets participating in the operation.[22]

The rise of PKK terror

Undoubtedly, the power vacuum in northern Iraq provided the PKK with an invaluable platform from where to continue its war against Turkey, as well as fertile ground on which to develop new recruits and supporters. Moreover, the organisation managed to mobilise both in and outside Turkey in order to finance its activities. For example, PKK members, who were able to flee to Western Europe after the military *coup d'état* of 1980, successfully organised thousands of Kurdish refugees and established well-organised pro-PKK Kurdish communities which provided moral and financial support.[23] By late 1990s it was believed that the PKK had thousands of members in Europe, with 11,500 'active members' in Germany alone.[24] There were reports of PKK involvement in illegal human smuggling operations in Western Europe, drug trafficking, extortion from people of Kurdish origin residing abroad and other illicit means.[25] According to British security sources, the PKK was responsible for 40 per cent of the heroin sold in the EU.[26] Again, the Turkish police reported that 80 percent of the drug trafficking to Europe was carried out through groups controlled by the PKK.[27] While according to Turkish intelligence, these activities made the PKK largely self-sufficient financially.[28]

With the increased PKK violence, as Turkish premier Demirel admitted, Turkey found

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[22]*The Daily Telegraph,* 15 May 1998.

[23]M. Ali Birand, *APO ve PKK,* (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayinlari, 1992), pp. 119-20; Kemal Burkay, 'The Kurdish Question-Its History and Present Situation' in *Contrast and Solutions in the Middle East,* Ole Hoiris and Sefa Martin Yurukel (eds.), 1997, (Aarhus C: Aarhus University Press, 1997), p. 467.

[24]*Milliyet*, 7 July 1999; *The Week in Germany*, 24 March 1995.

[25]It was reported that in twelve years the PKK smuggled as many as 220,000 people into Europe. For an extensive research on PKK's illegal human smuggling into Europe see, Metin Dalman and Ismail Tabak, *Avrupa'da Insan Ticareti ve PKK,* (Istanbul: Turk-Alman Basin Ajansi, 1995); *Milliyet*, 9 May 1995.

[26]*The Spectator,* 5 December 1998; Emin Gurses, *Ayrilikci Terorun Anatomisi/IRA-ETA-PKK,* (Istanbul: Baglam 1997), pp. 89-90; *Nokta,* 12 April 1992.

[27]'Uyusturucuda Kurt Karteli', *Cumhuriyet*, 22 December 1992.

[28]*Sabah*, 23 May 1996.

itself in 'a hidden war in the region.'[29] PKK attacks and numerous clashes between the PKK and the Turkish security forces cost no less than 30,000 lives and left tens of thousands of people injured between 1984-1998 including 5,349 civilians, and 5,314 security personnel. To cope with the issue, Turkey deployed around 270,000 security personnel in the region. This amounted to nearly one-third of its total security forces.[30] It was estimated that by the late 1990s Turkey spent in total around US$100 billion in fighting the PKK; a figure that was well above its foreign debt.[31] This amount did not include lost-tourism-revenues, which amounted to US$1 billion per year, and other contingent economic lost.[32] As such, the Turkish economy became more and more dependent on foreign aid and suffered significant structural economic problems such as high inflation rates, unemployment, huge domestic and foreign debt and worsening income distribution and lacked economic resources for its foreign policy initiatives designed to strengthen the country's role as an influential regional power. This was evident in the Black Sea Economic Project initiated by Turkey for improving its relations with ex-Soviet republics, most notably the Turkic states, and the Balkans.

Furthermore, the PKK's attacks on teachers and schools resulted in more than 3,600 schools being closed and 200 school teachers being killed in south-east Turkey. This obviously discouraged many teachers from serving in the region; one report revealed that 67 percent of the teachers assigned to the region refused to go, leaving an estimated 100,000 children without an education.[33] It also benefited the PKK, which, according to

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[29]'Demirel: Guneydogu'da Ortlu Savas Var', *Cumhuriyet,* 24 March 1992; For the PKK attacks between 1984 and 1999 see, Halil Himsek, *Seyh Sa'id Isyani ve PKK,* (Istanbul: Harp Akademileri Komutanligi, 2000), pp. 158-239; 'Petrol Tanklari Kundaklandi', *Cumhuriyet,* 1 September 1992; 'Sirnak'ta Savas', *Cumhuriyet,* 20 August 1992; 'Bebekleri Bile Oldurduler', *Cumhuriyet,* 3 October 1992.

[30]*Milliyet,* 2 September 1993.

[31] 'Meclis'in Guneydogu Itirafi', *Aksiyon,* 5 June 1998; Bal, 'Ortadogu'da', *op.cit,* p. 708.

[32]'Turizmde 20,000 Iptal', *Cumhuriyet,* 2 April 1992.

[33]*PKK Terrorism,* (Ankara: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), pp. 43-4; Kemal Kirisci, 'The Challenges of Terrorism: A Turkish Perspective', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 20, no. 3-4, (1996), p. 4; 'Haydi Simdi Butun Eller Dogu'ya', *Aksiyon,* 4 March 1999.

one survey, recruited half of its members from the unemployed, half from primary school graduates and 20 percent from those who have never attended any school, with possible overlaps between these categories.[34] This further obstructed social development in the region where literacy, already well below the national average (77 percent), was around 50 percent.[35] Also, the region's already poor economic conditions further deteriorated with fear and instability working against economic expansion. For example, the transport business, one of the main sectors of the regional economy, was reduced by 30-35 percent and exports to Iraq were further obstructed because of the PKK attacks.[36] Similarly, arable production and animal husbandry, other key sectors, almost came to a halt. According to the State Institute of Statistics (DIE), between 1985-1998, animal husbandry decreased by 40 percent.[37] Furthermore, it was estimated that more than two million Kurdish civilians were displaced and around 2,000 villages cleared or burnt as part of security operations since 1989.[38]

Due to economic and security reasons, there was also a large migration to neighbouring towns as well as big cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.[39] As a result, more than half of the Kurdish population now live in the larger cities of western Turkey. This added to the high rates of unemployment and led to other societal problems in these cities. It also created a certain amount of hostility amongst the Turkish population towards the Kurds. For example, Kurdish families were forced to leave some towns, particularly in the western part of Turkey and the Black Sea region, and jobs were refused

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[34]Yesim Comertoglu, 'Terorun Psikolojik Temelleri', *Strateji,* no. 2, (1995), p. 142; 'Temel Sorun Can Guvenligi', *Cumhuriyet,* 15 July 1990.

[35]'Temel Sorun Can Guvenligi', *Cumhuriyet,* 15 July 1990.

[36]'Guneydogu'da Gece Yolculugu Yok', *Cumhuriyet,* 27 September 1992; 'PKU Amabargosu Irak'a Ihracati Durdurdu', *Cumhuriyet,* 13 August 1992.

[37]*Milliyet*, 17 February 1999.

[38]*The Daily Telegraph,* 1 May 1998.

[39]'Guneydogudan Buyuk Kacis', *Nokta,* 27 September 1992, pp. 16-9; Guneydogu'nun Iki Onemli Sorunu: Guvenlik ve Isssizlik' *Cumhuriyet,* 18 June 1992.

to workers of Kurdish origin.[40]

The Kurdish issue, as set out above, had a significantly adverse influence on Turkey's external relations and restrained its foreign policy objectives in two different ways. First, Turkey's preoccupation with the issue relegated foreign policy issues to secondary concern. Moreover, countries such as Russia, Armenia, Cyprus and Greece all played the Kurdish card as a lever vis-à-vis Turkey in order to achieve their strategic goals meaning that Turkey's struggle with the Kurdish issue considerably reduced its ability to establish strong political and economic relations and thus to play a greater role in its region contrary to earlier expectations.[41]

On the other hand, Turkey also faced huge pressure from its western allies because of its poor human rights record and lack of success in the running of its democracy. In particular, the harsh policies of the security forces operating against the PKK during the forced clearance of villages during the security operations; the banning of pro-Kurdish parties; and the trial of leading Kurdish parliamentarians and other political figures who were accused of advocating separatism, were strongly criticised in the West.[42] Indeed, European Parliament ratified the Customs Union Agreement with Turkey in 1995 only after it conditioned the ratification on improvements in the area of democratisation and human rights.[43] Tensions also occasionally erupted between Turkey and some of its

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[40]As an example, the governor of Ordu, a Black Sea coastal town, banned the south-eastern origin workers to work in hazelnut farms on grounds that some of the workers might be PKK members. 'Kurt Tarim Iscisine Is Yasagi', *Cumhuriyet,* 6 September 1998; 'Guneybati Anadolu'da Turk-Kurt Catismasi', *Nokta,* 11 October 1992, pp. 28-30; 'Laz Kurt'e Sert Bakiyor', *Nokta,* 18 October 1992, pp. 36-4.

[41]For a detailed discussion on the impacts of the PKK terror on Turkish foreign policy see, Ihsan Bal and Onder Aytac, 'Soguk Savas Sonrasi Yeni Dusman Tanimlamalari Baglaminda Terorizm Sorununun Turk Dis Politkasina Etkileri' in *21. Yuzyilin Esiginde Turk Dis Politikasi*, Idris Bal (ed.), (Istanbul: Alfa, 2001), pp. 685-697, especially pp. 688-92.

[42]See, 'Turkey's future prospects for full-membership in the European Union: Obsession vs. reality', *Chapter Three*; Ihsan D. Dagi, 'Turkey in the 1990s: Foreign Policy, Human Rights, and the Search for a New Identity', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 4, no. 4, (Fall 1993), pp. 64-6.

[43]Mehmet A. Birand, *Turkiye'nin Gumruk Birligi Macerasi* 1956-1996, (Istanbul: AD, 1996), pp. 463-9; Philip Robins, 'More Apparent than Real? The Impact of the Kurdish Issue on Euro-Turkish Relations' in *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1900s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East*, Robert Olson (ed.), (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996), pp. 114-132.

European allies, notably Germany, over Turkey's Kurdish policy. Bonn imposed an arms embargo on Ankara in 1992 following allegations that Turkey was using German arms against its own civilian Kurdish nationals.[44] Again, following Turkish security operations in northern Iraq in 1995 Germany reacted to the intervention by refusing to sell arms to Turkey. Holland and Norway later followed suit.[45]

Nevertheless, the Turkish security forces had considerable success against the PKK during the late 1990s and they retained a certain foothold in northern Iraq due to the successful incursions there.[46] In this context, the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan's arrest in early 1999 marked a breakthrough on the PKK issue as the political rather than the military option was now increasingly emphasised. Following his detention as Ocalan claimed during his trial 'the period of uprising is over; in democratic countries violence has no place. Uprisings and revolutions cannot be a language for the solution of problems.'[47] While, Osman Ocalan, the new leader of the PKK and Ocalan's brother, declared. 'We are giving up the armed struggle. The process of converting the organisation into a peaceful group involves determination and patience.'[48]

The Turkish military leadership was sceptical of these policy changes[49] and the existence of PKK terrorists in Iran, Iraq and Syria was still considered a threat to Turkey.[50] Although the organization has promoted political optimism, according to intelligence sources, it has kept around 5,000 PKK guerrillas capable of waging another

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[44]'Almanya Ile Kurt Kavgasi', *Cumhuriyet,* 27 March 1992; 'Germany Lifts Ban on Military Aid to Turkey', *Newspot,* 13 May 5994; Peri Pamir, 'Turkey in its Revional Environment in the Post-bipolar Era: Opportunities and Constrains' in *Building Peace in the Middle East,* Elise Boulding (ed.), (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998), p. 142.

[45]'Germans suspend arms sales to Turks' *The New York Times,* 28 March 1995; Ergun Balci, 'K. Irak: Celiskiler ve Senaryolar', *Cumhuriyet,* 26 March 1995; Meltem Muftuler-Bac, 'Turkey: A New Player in Middle Eastern Politics', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 6, no. 4, (Fall 1999), pp. 118-9.

[46]'PKK'nin Eylem ve Kadrosu 1990 Duzeyine Cekildi', *Hurriyet,* 8 May 1998.

[47]'Kurt Devleti Gercekci Degil' *Hurriyet,* 1 June 1999; Nihat A. Ozcan, 'Ocalan'in Ince Taktikleri', *Zaman,* 5 October 1999.

[48]*Cumhuriyet*, 2 September 1999.

[49]'İşte MGK'ya Sunulan Rapor', *Sabah,* 30 November 2000.

[50]*Cumhuriyet*, 29 September 1999.

war on the Turkish border.[51] In Ankara's view, the PKK continued to have support from Tehran which replaced Syria as the main supporter of the organization.[52] Prime minister Ecevit publicly warned Iran not to give shelter to the PKK.[53]

Until 1991, Turkey had constantly denied 'the Kurdish reality'. For example, prime minister Yildirim Akbulut stated that 'there are no Kurds, only Turks here.'[54] Ankara also asserted that there was no Kurdish issue only a terror problem.[55] Despite this view, in order to find a genuine, lasting solution Turkey will have to rely on alternative policies than the military one. In fact, the Turkish security forces' harsh measures to stop the PKK from carving out a separate state in south-east of the country, though successful to a point, became one of the main factors to aggravate the issue.[56] It served to increase PKK support among the Kurdish population, and made the people in the region more disaffected and more alienated from the state. As in the Social Democratic Populist Party's (SHP) *Southeast Report* has noted, over the years successive governments generally focused on tightening security measures by way of marshal law, emergency measures, increased security forces and so on. However, socio-economic, psychological and cultural efforts were generally neglected.[57] It is no surprise that according to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, by 1999 the PKK, which began with no more than a few hundred guerrillas, is now estimated to have tens of thousands of members, with 15,000 armed supporters, and hundreds of thousands of sympathisers inside and outside Turkey.

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[51]Fikret Bila, 'Apo'yu Biz de Kullanmaliyiz', *Milliyet*, 28 November 2000.

[52]According to Turkish intelligence, the PKK moved some of its camps into Iranian territory after they lost its bases in northern Iraq. *Milliyet*, 28 July 1999.

[53]*Cumhuriyet*, 28 July 1999.

[54]'Akbulut: Herkes Turktur, Kurt Yoktur', *Cumhuriyet,* 31 July 1990.

[55]See prime minister Erbakan's press conference. *Washington Post,* 8 October 1996.

[56]For security measures implemented since 1983 see, Philip Robins, 'The Overlord State: Turkish Policy and the Kurdish Issue, *International Affairs,* vol. 69, no. 4, (July 1993), pp. 664-5.

[57]'SHP'nin Guneydogu Raporu', *Cumhuriyet,* 15 July 1990. Hasan Cemal, 'Guneydogu Haberleri', *Cumhuriyet,* 31 July 1990.

5.2. The rise of political Islam: A tough challenge to secular regime?

Like the Kurdish issue, the rise of political Islam also became an important internal security threat, which increasingly distracted Turkey from engaging in external relations during the period under question. Though the process dates back to the early 1980s, Turkey witnessed a swift rise in Islamic consciousness in the early 1990s, as the end of the Cold War further served to influence both internal and external factors. In particular, the electoral success of political Islam eventually enabled the pro-Islamist Refah Party to win power in 1996 for the first time in modern history. Given its anti-secular and anti-western stance, an empowered political Islam has increasingly been seen as a national security issue. Indeed, admiral Guven Erkaya, commander of the naval forces and the chief architect of the so-called '28 February process' which resulted in the removal of the Refah Party from power, declared in 1997 that Islamic fundamentalism had replaced PKK terror as Turkey's number one threat.[58] This declaration was largely influenced by the rise of the Refah Party.[59] Indeed, a 1997 national security policy paper declared the Islamic fundamentalist movement and the PKK's separatist terrorism as the immediate internal threats and explained that destroy them was of 'life and death' importance for Turkey.[60]

The efforts of the pro-Islamist government to change the country's staunchly pro-western orientation also created confusion and instability in regard to Turkish foreign and security priorities and direction. Furthermore, the army's decision to take a high profile role in domestic politics due to mistrust of the civil authorities, especially in the late 1990s, adversely affected the harmony between the civil and military establishment. Moreover, the military's growing role in politics further increased criticisms over the

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[58]During a National Security Council meeting on 28 February 1997, the military side forced the government to implement a twenty-point programme prepared to curtail growing Islamic fundamentalism.

[59]'Irtica PKK'dan Tehlikeli', *Milliyet*, 25 February 1997.

[60]Sariibrahimoglu, *op.cit.*, p. 26; *Milliyet*, 30 April 1997.

democratic credentials of Turkey.[61] It was clear that given the level domestic struggle at home, Turkey could not and would not pursue a consistent foreign policy and have a broader outlook *vis-à-vis* the new regional and international developments as opposed to its claim to play a 'great power' role.

There is no doubt that developments in the Islamic world in particular the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Gulf War of 1991, and the Bosnian war had a considerable impact on the rise of Islamic movements in the Middle East and North Africa.[62] The Iranian Revolution gave impetus to existing movements. Moreover, the economy-oriented foreign polices of the early 1980s and the search for political support for the national causes, such as Cyprus, have all drove Turkey to pursue closer relations with Middle Eastern and Arab countries which, to a considerable extent conflicted with its secular and western-looking policies. Its neutral position in the Iran-Iraq war of the 1990s also allowed it to improve economic relations with both countries, as well as other Muslim countries such as Libya, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.[63]

One movement, in particular, the Milli Gorus, (national view) represented national political Islam at an organisational level in Turkey through its numerous political parties

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[61]For the army's mission to defend the secular regime see, M. Ali Birand, *The Generals' Coup in Turkey,* (London: Brassey's, 1987), p. 177 and p. 187; Heath Lowry, 'Challenges to Turkish Democracy in the Decade of the Nineties', *Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies,* vol. 5, (Fall 1996), p. 108.

[62]Raggay Ham, 'Exporting Iran's Islamic Revolution: Steering a Path between Pan-Islam and Nationalism' in *Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East,* Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar (eds.), (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), p. 13; Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East,* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1995), p. 118. On Iran's foreign policy objectives see, Mohammad Javad Larijani, 'Iran's Foreign Policy: Principles and Objectives', *The Iranian Journal of International Affairs,* vol. 7, no. 4, (Winter 1996), pp. 755-63. For internal reasons that feed political/societal unrest in the Middle East and thus contribute to the rise of Islamic groups see, E. G. H. Joffe, 'Relations Between the Middle East and the West', *Middle Eastern Journal,* pp. 257-8; Anders Jerichow, 'The Mosque and Fear of Fundamentalism' in *Contrast and Solutions in the Middle East,* Ole Hoiris and Sefa Martin Yurukel (eds.), (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1997), p. 72; Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser, *A Sense of Siege: The Geopolitics of Islam and the West,* (Colorado: Rand, 1995), pp. 165-6. For the impact of the Gulf war on the process see, Pierre Salinger, 'The United States, The United Nations, and the Gulf War', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 49, no. 4, (Autumn 1995), p. 612. For the effects of the Bosnian tragedy see, Hilal Khashan, 'The New World Order and the Tempo of Militant Islam', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies,* vol. 24, no. 1, (1997), p. 9.

[63]See, Mehmet Gonlubol, 'Turkiye'nin1980'li Yillardaki Dis Politikasinin Bir Degerlendirilmesi' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi (1919-1995),* (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), pp. 611-632.

which were established and banned one after the other. The first to be established was the National Order Party (Milli Nizam Partisi, MNP), then the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi, MSP), followed by the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi, RP), and finally the Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi, FP) and the Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi, SP).[64] The Islamic parties founded in last thirty years have adhered the view that Turkey should follow a more pro-Islamic foreign policy and establish close relations with Muslim countries in every field including the creation of an EU-like economic body; an organisation of the United Nations of Islam, NATO-type Islamic security pacts, a common currency and so on. In this regard, Refah Party's 1995 election manifesto categorised the EU as a Christian club and argued that a Muslim Turkey should not be a part of it. 'The objective in foreign policy is to see Turkey not as a satellite but a leader country. Thus, Turkey's place should be within the "union of world Muslim countries" or "Islamic Union from Kazakhstan to Morocco" not the EU'[65] or as Refah Party leader Necmettin Erbakan declared 'when we come to power we will no longer be the servant, the slave of the West'.[66]

In addition to this anti-western stance, relations with the newly-independent Turkic republics of the former Soviet Union were less of a foreign policy priority and the Refah

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[64]For general reading on pro-Islamist political parties in modern Turkish politics see, Binnaz Toprak, 'Islam and the Secular State in Turkey' in *Turkey: Political, Social and Economic Challenges in the 1990s,* C. Balim, E. Kalaycioglu, C. Karatas, G. Winrow and F. Yasemee (eds.), (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 91-6; Ilkay Sunar and Sabri Sayari, 'Democracy in Turkey: Problems and Prospects' in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule,* Guillermo O'Donnell, P. C. Schmitter, L.. Whitehead (eds), (Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 177-82; Nilufer Gole, 'Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: The Making of Elites and Counter-Elites', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 51, no. 1, (Winter 1997), pp. 45-58; Michael B. Bishku, 'Ataturk's Legacy versus Religious Reassertion: Secularism and Islam in Modern Turkey', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 3, no. 4, (Fall 1992), pp. 86-90; Ronnie Margulies and Ergin Yildizoglu, 'The Resurgence of Islam and the Welfare Party in Turkey' in *Middle East Report*, Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (eds.), (London: L. B. Tauris, 1997), p. 146-9.

[65]*Refah Partisi Secim Beyannamesi* (Ankara: 1995), p. 29; Herve Couturier, 'Islamist Leader Formidable Politician', *Middle East Times*, 31 December 1995; Necmettin Erbakan, 'Turkiye'nin Dis Politikasi Nasil Olmali?', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), pp. 58-61; Turker Alkan, 'The National Salvation Party in Turkey' in *Islam and Politics in the Modern Middle East,* Metin Heper and Raphael Israeli (eds.), (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 79-102.

[66]*Turkish Daily News,* 6 January 1996.

Party even opposed Ankara's efforts to integrate the republics into various international organisations. In the words of Erbakan, 'Turkish officials visiting the Turkic republics advise them to join the Western multilateral bodies to be able to integrate into the international society. We cannot possibly turn a blind eye to this. If you follow Turkey you will be miserable too.'[67]

Secularists feared that these developments would reverse all the reforms achieved within the context of Europeanisation and secularisation since the establishment of the Republic. For example, Hasan Mezarci, a RP deputy who was expelled from the party and imprisoned because of his anti-Kemalist views, claimed 'we want to establish the Islamic Caliphate and state system (similar to the Ottoman administrative system) and Islamic rule.' He even suggested that Ataturk's mausoleum in Ankara should be knocked down.[68] The secular elite of Turkey viewed these radical views with serious concern.

Since the late 1980s, Refah had steadily increased its votes in successive local and general elections. With the collapse of the communist regimes, religious sentiments gained increased importance in the Muslim-populated Balkans, Central Asia and Caucasus regions. This also had an impact on Turkey, as sharp ideological differences tended to wane, ethnic, national and religious identity politics began to take priority.[69] For example, in the 1995 general elections, nationalist and Islamist parties gained 34 percent of the votes. This figure had been less than 17 per cent in 1991 and 13 percent in 1987. In other words, between 1987 and 1991, these parties increased their vote by 28 per cent while between 1991 and 1995 it rose by 104 per cent.[70] In addition to this, one of the main factors, which helped the RP to become so popular, within such a relatively short

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[67]'Turkiye'ye Benzerseniz Perisan Olursunuz', *Cumhuriyet*, 15 December 1992.

[68]'Refahli Mezarci: Anitkabir Yikilsin', *Cumhuriyet*, 14 November 1992.

[69]Ayse G. Ayata and Sencer Ayata, 'Turkey's Mainstream Political Parties on the Centre-Right and Centre Left' in *Turkey Since 1970: Politics, Economics and Society,* Debbie Lovatt (ed.), (Hampshire and N. York: 2001, Palgrave), p. 107.

[70]Nilufer Narli and Sinan Dirlik, 'Turkiye'nin Siyasal Haritasi', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 2, no. 9, (May-June 1996), p.133.

period of time, was the failure of the mainstream secular parties to fulfil their promises particularly in the area of economic welfare and achieving a rise in the standard of living. Furthermore, indifference to issues such as corruption, unemployment, hyperinflation, the weakening of traditional values and institutions, all helped to increase the Refah vote. The divide between the centre-right parties also helped Refah's success especially in the local elections. The RP slogan of *adil duzen* (just order) even managed to attract, unusually, some social democratic votes, by promising to put an end to clientism, corruption and waste.[71] The RP also superseded all other political parties in terms of the size of its membership and also in the elaborateness and efficiency of the party organisation, and had a responsive and well-organised grass-root membership.[72]

Furthermore, Refah's rhetoric and party slogans found resonance with the wider public. For example, Turkey's constant exclusion from the EU fostered a suspicion that the Europeans would never include Turkey because of its Islamic identity. Finally, regional and global developments in the international system, in particular, the perceived inaction of the West over the Bosnian, Chechen and Karabakh crises accelerated the disappointment with the West and put Western values on trial. The demonstrations that took place during the conflicts clearly underlined this, and various Islamist and nationalist groups were quick to seize the opportunity to exploit this disillusionment by appearing as self-declared liberators of these regions.[73] Needless to say nationalist and Islamist parties gained overwhelming support from the situation. In particular, the RP had vowed the same arguments for years, boosted its share of support. For example, at a speech during

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[71]Huri Tursan, 'Ersatz Democracy: Turkey in the 1990s' in *Mediterranean Politics,* Vol. 2, Gillespie Richard (ed.), (London: Pinter, 1996), pp. 222-5.

[72]'Secimde Refah Farki', *Cumhuriyet,* 4 November 1992; Sencer Ayata, 'Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 50, no. 1, (Winter 1996), p. 52. Birol A. Yesilada, 'Realignment and Party Adaptation: The Case of the Refah and Fazilet Parties' in *Politics, Parties and Elections in Turkey*, Sabri Sayari and Yilmaz Esmer (eds), (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2002), pp. 172-5.

[73]Ihsan D. Dagi, 'Islam, Politics and the Welfare Party', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 19, nos. 3-4, (1995), p. 26-7; Yasemin Celik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Westport: Praeger, 1999), p. 160.

demonstrations in support of Bosnia, Erbakan blamed both the West and the Turkish government for failing to intervene in response to the Serb atrocities against Bosnian Muslims. 'As the Serbs are getting more and more barbaric, our prime minister is rushing to kiss the Israeli prime minister's hands. The West and the US that destroyed Saddam will not intervene in this conflict this time because they have no real interest in the region. Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia all helped Bosnia but not Turkey.'[74]

In 1987, the Welfare Party, in its first election, obtained only 7.2 percent of the votes. In 1991, the party increased its vote to around 10 percent of the electorate.[75] The local elections held in 1994, were a clear signal to the right-wing secular parties that protest votes that had usually gone to left-wing parties were now going to Islamists and Refah got 17.8 percent of the total vote and won office in 28 of the 72 municipalities, including Turkey's largest city Istanbul and the capital Ankara.[76] In the 1995 elections, the RP was the first party to gain 158 deputies in a 550-member parliament. This represented 21.3 percent of the total votes cast.[77] However, anti-Refah opposition was strong in parliament with both DYP and ANAP declaring their opposition to a coalition with the RP.[78] Ecevit, the leader of the DSP, also refused to form a government with the RP arguing that the RP was not committed to secularism.[79] In June 1996, following the collapse of the short-lived coalition government between the two right wing, liberal-conservative parties, the DYP and the ANAP, supported by the leftist DSP, (which was viewed as an army inspired alliance intended to keep the RP out of power), Erbakan became the first pro-Islamist premier in the Republic's seventy-year history.

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[74]'Erbakan: Hukumet Katliama Seyirci Kaliyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 23 August 1992.
[75]In this election two other minor parties came under the RP banner in order to overcome the 10 percent threshold and received 17 percent of the votes, Toprak, *op.cit.*, p. 92.
[76]*The New York Times*, 29 March 1994.
[77]*Milliyet*, 26 December 1996.
[78]*Hurriyet*, 26 December 1996.
[79]*Cumhuriyet*, 16 January 1996.

Departing from pro-Western foreign policy?

Erbakan's anti-Western, anti-American and anti-Israel rhetoric created problems for Turkey's external relations, particularly among the Western allies. For example, Morton Abramowitz, the former US ambassador to Ankara, publicly asked: 'How do you deal with a NATO ally led by a man who is fundamentally anti-NATO, fundamentally anti-Semitic and fundamentally pro-Islamist, even if he's largely behaving himself?'[80]

Erbakan argued that Turkey should first improve its relations with the Islamic world, be a member of an 'Islamic common market and Islamic defence pact' as opposed to the EU, and once it had attained an equal standing with Europe should then seek to engage with it.[81]

In line with this position, Erbakan received a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood as his first foreign visitor as leader and paid his first foreign visit to Iran, in August 1996. He then made priority to visits to Nigeria, as well as Egypt and Libya rather than to Europe or Central Asia. This indicated the shift in Turkey's foreign policy priorities under the Refah government and further bolstered the suspicion, especially in the West, that a definite 'alteration of the route' had begun.[82] During his Iranian visit he concluded a US$23 billion gas deal, which had been initiated before his term in 1995.[83] But the important point was that the deal was concluded just a few days after a bill passed in the US Congress which banned companies from investing over US$40 million in Iran and Libya.[84] Though Turkish officials insisted that the agreement did not involve any investment and was only a trade deal[85], it was also believed that during the visit the two

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[80]*International Herald Tribune,* 12 August 1996.

[81]Fatih Cekirge, 'Erbakan'dan Avrupa'ya Uyari', *Sabah,* 4 December 1996; 'Erbakan's Vision: Islamic Harmony and a Cleanced Society', *Briefing,* 14 October 1991, p. 6.

[82]*Newspot,* no. 20, 1996. Sami Kohen, 'Kimin Dis Politikasi?', *Milliyet,* 9 October 1996.

[83]*Turkish Daily News,* 16 January 1996.

[84]Alan Makovsky, 'Turkey: Work to Keep it Western', *International Herald Tribune,* 19 August 1996.

[85]'Turkey-Iran Signs Gas Deal', *Washington Post,* 12 August 1996.

countries held talks on establishing co-operation in defence-related industries.[86] Erbakan even went further during his Libya visit by attacking the US by announcing that he would co-operate with Gaddafi against the terrorism threat, which Gaddafi claimed the West was supporting against his country.[87] During Erbakan's visit Gaddafi also accused Turkey of mistreating its Kurdish population and following polices in favour of Israel against the Arab world.[88]

Nevertheless, Erbakan hoped that Refah's Islamic character would help in easing long-lasting differences between Turkey and Muslim countries in general and its southern neighbours in particular. This could be interpreted as Refah's attempt to live up to its campaign to support Muslim states in their national causes in international forums, and its attempts to urge previous Turkish governments to ally themselves with the Islamic world rather than the Western world. In this context, the Refah government sought to establish bilateral and multilateral relations with the Islamic world, as well as with Islamic non-governmental organisations and groups (including radical Islamist groups such as Palestinian Hamas). For example, Refah officials somewhat naively hoped that Syria would extradite the PKK leader Ocalan as a gesture of good will.[89] On a multilateral level, the Refah government sought to bring together some rising nations from the Islamic world under the Developing-8 (D-8) initiative.[90] The project aimed to establish economic and trade co-operation in many fields among the members.[91]

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[86]For the US's reaction to increasing relations with Iran see, Samil Tayyar, *Refahyol Tutanaklari,* (Ankara: Umit, 1997), p. 165; S. Gulden Ayman, 'Turkiye-Iran Iliskileri', *Radikal,* 16 December 1996; Ergun Balci, 'Turkiye ve Iran', *Cumhuriyet,* 22 December 1996.

[87]Sami Kohen, 'Kimin Dis Politikasi?', *Milliyet,* 9 October 1996.

[88]It was reported to have Gaddafi said that 'it does not make much difference to oppress nations seeking independence. Turkey (the Ottomans) tried it against the Arabs fighting for their independence just as the Kurds doing today and failed. No doubt one day they (the Kurds) will stand under the sun of the Middle East.' Fatih Cekirge, 'Libya'da CIA Krizi', *Sabah,* 8 October 1996.

[89]Fatih Cekirge, 'Suriye ile Apo Pazarligi', *Sabah,* 11 July 1996.

[90]It includes, apart from Turkey, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria and Pakistan.

[91]*Istanbul Declaration of Developing-8 (D-8),* Istanbul, 15 June 1997; 'D-8, Yunanistan'i Urkuttu', *Aksiyon,* 17 January 1997, pp. 44-50.

However, the main state institutions such as the army, the security services, and especially the ministry of foreign affairs and the secular elite gave little support to the government on these foreign policy objectives and were determined to maintain the *status quo* and to curtail the Refah government's objectives. The government was isolated especially by the army's actions. It was not informed over the details of the Turkish-Israeli military accords or about military operations in northern Iraq against the PKK guerrillas or of the capture of Semdin Sakik, a senior PKK leader, by a special operation in northern Iraq.[92] Similarly, the national security policy document of 1997, which not only reflected the military's evaluation of the internal and external threats to Turkey but also served as the foundation of the country's security policies, was not submitted to the cabinet for approval until Refah had lost power. Military officials argued that it would have been unrealistic to expect the government, which denied the existence of an Islamic fundamentalist threat, and vigorously courted better relations with Iran, to support a document which listed fundamentalism as one of the main threats to the country's security.[93] Given these restrains, the Refah Government, in its one-year term, could not, despite early expectations, make any real move away from Turkey's traditional Western allies or Israel.[94] Erbakan even signed military co-operation agreements with Israel and agreed to renew the parliamentary mandate for 'Operation Provide Comfort', which he had previously accused of transporting weapons to Armenia, and collaborating with the PKK.[95] He also remained committed to the customs union agreement with the EU, despite his earlier promise 'to tear it up' if and when he came to power.[96]

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[92]*Milliyet,* 14 April 1998.

[93]Gareth Jenkins, *Context and Circumstances: The Turkish Military and Politics,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 47-9.

[94]See, Philip Robins, 'Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan', *Survival,* vol. 39, no. 2, (Summer 1997), pp. 82-100; 'Islam and Turkey: the Regional Impact', *Bulletin of Regional Co-operation in the Middle East,* vol. 6, no. 2, (Summer 1997).

[95]*Cumhuriyet,* 29 June 1992; *Meydan,* 16 January 1992.

[96]*Sabah,* 14 February 1995; *Turkiye,* 9 March 1995.

Thus, despite Erbakan's pre-election slogans and rhetoric, he was unable to change Turkey's western-orientated foreign policy nor was he successful in establishing a new approach with the Islamic world. In any event, his government was short lived and forced to resign in June 1997, as a result of what was perceived as a 'civil intervention', a 'quiet' or 'post-modern coup', or even a 'fourth coup' in the Republic's history.[97] As one Turkish academic noted 'the armed forces once again showed that they were the primary decision makers in the conduct of the foreign policy in Turkey.'[98] But although Erbakan's restricted Islamist foreign policy was unable to re-direct Turkish foreign policy orientation, he did cause deep concern, and uneasiness among the ruling elite and the secular public.

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[97]Erol Ozkasnak who was serving as the secretary of the Turkish chief of staff at that time acknowledged this in a TV interview. 'Ceviz Kabugu', *Kanal 6,* 15 January 2001.

[98]Celik, *op.cit.*, p. 152.

PART FOUR

A NEW POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE BALKANS AND ITS IMPACT ON TURKEY

Unprecedented changes in the European landscape in the late 1980s not only had a profound effect on the Balkans political map but also opened up a new chapter in Turkey's external relations vis-à-vis the region. Like Central Asia and Caucasia Turkey's relationship with the Balkans during the Cold War had been limited and for the most part confined to dealing bilateral Turco-Greek issues. Given Turkey's special ties and proximity to the region, it soon became an 'unofficial centre' for the new post-Cold War regimes, communities and newly-independent Balkan states desiring close relations on economic, political and military levels. However, although Turkey was able to form close relations with some of the countries of the region (i.e. Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, and some of the ex-Yugoslav republics), it failed to respond in many cases when the sudden and unpredictable changes caught it by surprise. Nor was it able to develop an approach to the ethnic Turks and the Balkan Muslim populations.

Ankara's desire to exert a strong influence on the new Balkans was further hampered by the rise of new security challenges to Turkey's immediate interests in one of the most volatile parts of Europe in the immediate post-Cold War era. More specifically, the painful disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1992 and the Kosovo crisis of the late 1990s highlighted that appropriate mechanisms to prevent crises in the post-Cold War years period were not yet fully established and soon the Balkans found itself in the bloodiest conflict that Europe had witnessed since 1945. Increasingly, therefore, Turkey was to be preoccupied with how to contain the repercussions of the transition witnessed in the area rather than seizing the opportunities of the new era. Additionally, developments in the region also opened up new areas of tension and rivalry for the two Aegean neighbours, Turkey and Greece. Effectively, this tense relationship remained as a significant impediment in Turkey's overall Balkan policies and other areas of Turkish concern,

particularly its relations with Europe over the period understudy.

CHAPTER SIX

THE BALKANS: A TURKISH SPHERE OF INFLUENCE?

6.1. The implications of the Yugoslav crisis for Turkey: Facing its Ottoman legacy

The dramatic collapse of communist influence in the Balkans, not only provided Turkey with the opportunity to emerge as a major regional actor but also offered the opportunity to foster close relations with the regional states free of Cold War restrictions. In this context, the emergence of new states, and, in particular, the rediscovery of Turkish minorities (in Bulgaria, Romania and some of the ex-Yugoslav republics) and large Muslim communities (in Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia and Albania) created a real hope in Ankara that it would be able to exert its influence in regional affairs.

However, the Yugoslav crisis quickly highlighted the limitations of such aspiration. Events in Bosnia and the Kosovo came to pre-occupy Ankara's Balkan policy as Turkey tried to fend off rising challenges, as much as cultivate new opportunities. Thus, Turkey was unable to concentrate on building strong economic and political relations with the new Balkan states. Prior to the end of the Cold War, the two superpowers, to some extent, were able to 'manage' the region. However, in the new era, Europe a post-Cold War strategic as well as economic power, with conflicting interests and divergent policies, struggled to fill the power vacuum, and this meant that the increasing ethnic tensions and rivalries went unchecked. As one observer explained, 'the Cold War years in the Balkans played a role as a freezer but with the new era the door of the freezer has been torn away, and the politics and attitudes of the pre-1945 years lie thawing in the sun. Many give a revolting smell.'[1]

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[1]For the origins and dynamics of the Yugoslav crises see, John B. Allcock, 'Borders, States, Citizenship: Unscrambling Yugoslavia' in *The Changing Shape of the Balkans,* F. W. Carter and H. T. Norris (eds), (London: UCL Press, 1996), pp. 63-79; Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War,* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 177; William Pfaff, 'The Balkan Ailments are Political, Thus Treatable', *International Herald Tribune,* 8 October 1996; Harvey J. Feldman, 'The Balkan Dimensions of the Yugoslav Crisis', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* (Summer 1992), p. 21; Gabriel Partos, 'Still Europe's

In late 1991 and early 1992, the EEC's decision to recognise the breakaway republics of Croatia and Slovenia[2] led to the Serbo-Croat conflict developing into a full-scale bloody war in August 1991 that resulted in around 18,000 Croat casualties and saw 420,000 people being either displaced in Croatia or becoming refugees.[3] As the military conflict spilled over into Bosnia, it evolved into a real human catastrophe.[4] Until the end of the war in 1995, the conflict produced a stream of refugees, mostly Muslims. Furthermore, the Serbs pursued a policy of 'ethnic cleansing' in the form of brutal displacement of civilians, coupled with concentration camps, and gang rapes, particularly, of Bosnian Muslim women. As a result of this, it is believed that between 150,000 and 200,000 people were killed. About the same number were wounded; 3.5 million were classified as refugees or displaced persons.[5]

The Yugoslav crisis, in particular when it spilled over into Bosnia, forced Turkey to adopt new and more active policies towards the region due to massive internal and external pressures, as well as strategic necessity. At the time there were more than three million Turkish citizens residing in Western Europe, Turkey's biggest trade partner, and the Yugoslav crisis severely affected cargo and passenger transport as Turkey was dependent on Serbian roads for both transporting Turkish goods and immigrant workers to and from Europe. Indeed, during the conflict a number of Turkish workers were killed

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Powder-Keg', *The World Today,* vol. 53, no: 4, (April 1997), pp- 88-91.

[2]'Yugoslavya Tarih Oldu', *Cumhuriyet,* 1 February 1992; John Zametica, *The Yugoslav Conflict,* (London: Brassey's, 1992), pp. 43-4; Lenard J. Cohen, *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition,* Second edition, (Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press, 1995), p. 199. For the EU's Balkan policies see, Richard Caplan, 'The European Community's Recognition of New States in Yugoslavia: The Strategic Implications', *The Journal of Strategic Studies,* vol. 21, no. 3, (September 1998), pp. 24-45.

[3]*Information Notes on Former Yugoslavia,* UNCHR, no. 10, (October 1994), p. 18.

[4]Christopher Cviic, *Remaking the Balkans',* (London: RUSI, 1995), pp. 83-5; Zametica, *op.cit.,* pp. 36-7; 'A Fragile Peace for Bosnia', *Strategic Survey 1995-96,* (London: Oxford University Press for the IISS, 1996), pp. 134-5.

[5]'Another Destructive Year', *op.cit.,* p. 104; *The Economist,* 29 May 1993. Sabrina P. Ramet, 'Introduction: The Roots of Discord and the Language of War' in *Beyond Yugoslavia: Politics, Economics, and Culture in a Shattered Community,* Sabrina P. Ramet and Ljubia S. Adamovich (eds.), (Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 7-8.

and the UN-imposed embargo on Serbia brought additional costs to the Turkish economy.[6]

Moreover, the disintegration of former Yugoslavia, and the attempt by Serbia to create a 'greater Serbia' was perceived as changing the entire balance of power in the area at the expense of other regional states which would inevitably increase 'Slav-Orthodox' influence and make its rivals Russia and Greece the leading powers in the region.[7] Given its proximity to the region and its tense relationship with Greece this was potentially a serious challenge to Turkey's overall security interests. In this context, Athens' strong pro-Serbian polices, which later received backing from Russia, together with Greek, Bosnian Serb co-operation, convinced Ankara that the Balkans soon be dominated by a strong anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim coalition in which Greece would play a decisive role.[8] Thus, Turkey tried to get support for its Bosnian policies from other Balkan countries such as Romania, Bulgaria and Macedonia. The visit by president Turgut Ozal to those countries in 1993 resulted in their agreement to obey all measures taken by the UN to end the Bosnia crisis.[9] Furthermore, Ankara also feared that the crisis might cause mass refugee flows into Turkey (as was the case following the Gulf War and when the Turkish minority was forced to flee Bulgaria in 1980).[10]

In addition to its geographic proximity, Turkey's distinct cultural ties with the region were another major factor in drawing Turkey into the crisis. In fact, from the fourteenth century until its withdrawal (in the wake of the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and the First World War), the Ottoman state was very much a Balkan power. The decline of the

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[6]*Newspot,* 11 July 1991.

[7]Ali Karaosmanoglu, 'Balkanlar'da Baris Askeri Cozumden Gecer', *Strateji,* no. 3, (1995), p. 7.

[8]Duygu B. Sezer, 'Turkey in the New Security Environment in the Balkan and Black Sea Region' in *Turkey Between East and West,* Vojtech Mastny and R. Craig Nation (eds.), (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), p. 84.

[9]'President Turgut Ozal Visits the Balkans', *Newspot,* 25 January 1993.

[10]Turkey hosted about 25,000 Bosnian refugees during the crisis. 'Bosnians Being Settled in Tekirdag', *Newspot,* 18 June 1992 and '269 More Bosnians in Turkey', *Newspot,* 19 November 1992.

Ottomans resulted in the mass migration of Turks and other Muslim groups including Albanians, Bosnians and Pomaks to Turkey from different parts of the Balkans. At the same time, with the emergence of new states with new borders, a significant percentages of the Turkish and non-Turkish Muslim population remained, scattered all over the region, but bound by religious and ethnic ties that would always allow for close relations with Turkey.[11] Thus, as one Turkish academic has pointed out, the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans is represented not only by around 10 million Muslims but also by the Ottoman social and communal organisational structure and identity patterns seen in Bulgaria, Albania, the former Yugoslavia, and northern Greece.[12]

Thus, since the end of the Cold War Turkey has been forced to face its Ottoman past in the Balkans (the same is also true for Caucasia), and Bosnia and Albania were the cornerstones of the Turkish involvement in the Balkans during the Ottoman period meaning that the protection of those former subjects of the Ottoman Empire in the region was viewed not only as a moral duty but was also essential for Turkish strategic influence.[13] As Bosnian vice-president Ayoup Ghanic put it, the defence of Turkey does not start with the Turkish borders but in Bosnia and as such the Bosnian war in fact was 'Turkey's war.'[14] Reflecting these feelings for example, president Ozal in his speech in support of Bosnia in 1992 stated that Turkey was responsible for looking after the well

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[11]It is believed that there are more than two million people of Turkish ethnicity live in the Balkans. For Turkish minority in the region see, Halit Eren, 'Balkanlar'da Turk ve Diger Musluman Toplumlari ve Goc Olgusu' in *Balkanlar,* Ismail Soysal (ed.), (Istanbul: OBIV, 1993), pp. 289-99.

[12]Ali L. Karaosmanoglu, 'Turkish Foreign Policy: Some Introductory Remarks', *International Journal of Turkish Studies,* vol. 6, nos. 1-2, (Winter 1992-1994), p. 14

[13]Ahmet Davudoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Turkiye'nin Uluslararasi Konumu,* (Istanbul: Kure, 2001), pp. 314-8; Ihsan D. Dagi, 'Turkey in the 1990s: Foreign Policy, Human Rights, and the Search for a New Identity', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 4, no. 4, (Fall 1993), p. 74; Prevelakis George, 'The Return of Macedonia Question' in *The Changing Shape of the Balkans,* F. W. Carter and H. T. Norris (eds), (London: UCL Press, 1996), p. 60.

[14]A Bosnian commander's plea for support from Turkey in the conflict reflects this belief best. 'Turkey should be the country to help us most; we accept ourselves as part of Turkey in the Balkans. 'Umudun Adi Turkiye', *Cumhuriyet,* 4 August 1992. 'Cengiz Candar, 'Turkiye, Bosna-Hersek ve "Tarihle Barismak"', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), p. 284; *TGRT (*Turkish TV channel*),* 22 January 1995.

being of the Muslim populations of the Balkans.

> As long as Turkish Republic exists we will not allow the destruction of Bosnia. For us, Bosnia is a new Andalusia which we have only discovered at the end of the twentieth century. Its fate will not be the same as Andalusia. To look after this trust that history has put on our shoulders after a century, is a moral, historical, national and sacred duty. It is a duty of honour. We will revere this honour.[15]

Indeed, since the end of the Cold War the non-Turkish Muslim populations of the area had turned to Turkey as the *de facto* source of regional support for all Balkan Muslims. In the words of the president Demirel:

> The international community remained silent over the developments in Bosnia for a long time. Turkey showed every effort to diffuse the attempts of extermination and ethnic cleansing of the Bosnians. They are our last remnants in Europe. They came to us for help and said 'you have a responsibility because you made us Muslims; either you will protect us or take us out of these lands.'[16]

In the same way, in the face of the threat of a 'Greater Serbia' Albanians (in both Albania and Kosovo), as well as the Muslims of Bosnia and Sandjak, and also the government in Macedonia made repeated appeals for Turkey's support.[17] The prime minister of Kosovo argued that 'it is time for Turkey to have its influence felt in the Balkans.'[18] In this context, the besieged government of Bosnia-Herzegovina repeatedly sought Ankara's help to stem the advance of the militarily superior Serbian nationalist forces.[19] During his several visits to Ankara, the Bosnian president Alija Izzetbegovic, demanded that Turkey continue its political support for lifting the arms embargo imposed

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[15]'Cumhurbaskani Turgut Ozal'in Bosna-Hersek Mitingindeki Konusmasi', *Turkiye Gunlugu,* no. 22, (Spring 1992), pp. 10-1.

[16]*Cumhurbaskani Suleyman Demirel'in Harp Akademileri'nde 'Turkiye Kafkasya Balkanlar ve Ortadogu' Konulu Konferansi,* (Istanbul: 8 March 2000).

[17]Ismail Soysal, 'Gunumuzde Balkanlar ve Turkiye'nin Tutumu' in *Balkanlar,* Ismail Soysal (ed.), (Istanbul: OBIV, 1993), p. 237; David Bachard, *Turkey and the European Union,* (London: CER, 1998), p. 38; Graham E. Fuller, 'Turkey and the Middle East Northern Tier' in *The Middle East in Global Change,* Laura Guazzone (ed.), (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 50; Mustafa Kahramanyol, 'Balkanlar'da Muslumanlar'in Dunu Bugunu', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), pp. 263-8; Ersin Onulduran, 'Bolgesel Bir Guc Olarak Turkiye', *Strateji,* no. 2, (1995), p. 52; Peri Pamir, 'Turkey in its Regional Environment in the Post-bipolar Era: Opportunities and Constrains' in *Building Peace in the Middle East,* Elise Boulding (ed.), (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p. 140.

[18]'Bosna-Hersek'teki Savas Kosova'ya Sicrar', *Cumhuriyet,* 18 June 1992.

[19]Tozun Bahceli, 'Turkey, the Gulf Crisis, and the New World Order' in *The Gulf War and the New World Order,* Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael (eds.), (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), p. 443.

against Bosnia, 'we don't have the feeling that we are alone. What Turkey has done for Bosnia is very important.'[20]

Another dynamic of the issue was the considerable number of Balkan citizens living in Turkey. According to various estimates, this number was between 10-12 million, most of whose ancestors migrated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the Ottomans withdrew from the region.[21] It was estimated that the Bosnians that settled in Turkey over the past decades account for approximately five per cent of the Turkish population.[22] It obviously helped buttress Turkish interest in Bosnia.[23] As a member of the Bosnian presidential council pointed out, 'we have managed to organise a 16-million strong Bosnian lobby through four million Bosnians living in Turkey. But we have not been able to get any positive response from the Turkish government so far in our demand to receive weapons.'[24] Accordingly, lobby groups representing Balkan states (such as Bosnia, Albania and Macedonia) as well as the wider public became an important source in shaping Turkey's new Balkan policy. Massive protests, meetings and other campaigns were organised by various groups and political parties in support of Bosnia in all major cities.[25] In fact, domestic pressure was the foremost reason for Turkey's growing engagement in the Balkans.

When the crises erupted, Turkey favoured the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans and the unity and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia.[26] Indeed, it was only after

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[20]*Newspot,* 6 July 1993.

[21]Oya A. Maghisuddin, 'Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Ortadogu Ekseninde Turk Dis Politikasi: Etkenler ve Tercihler', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 2, no. 9, (May-June 1996), p. 258.

[22] Bahceli, 'Turkey', *op.cit.,* p. 443; *The Economist,* 12 September 1992.

[23]Duygu B. Sezer, 'The Implications of the Yugoslav Crisis for Turkey's Relations with Western Europe' in *The Implications of the Yugoslav Crisis for Western Europe's Foreign Relations,* Mathias Jopp (ed.), (Paris: WEU-Institute for Security Studies, 1994), p. 33.

[24]'Turkiye'den Silah Bekliyoruz', *Cumhuriyet,* 22 August 1992.

[25]*Cumhuriyet,* 23 August 1992. For instance, thousands of schoolgirls marched to protest Serbian atrocities and international organisations carrying banners like 'atrocities in Bosnia where is the UN?'. 'Massacre in Bosnia-Herzegovina Condemned', *Newspot,* 28 January 1993.

[26]See, Turkish foreign minister's statement, 'The Unity and Territorial Integrity of Yugoslavia Must be Protected', *Newspot,* 4 July 1991.

the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia by the EU and the US that Turkey decided to recognise the four new republics of the former Yugoslavia together in February 1992.[27] The reason for its hesitancy was that it did not want to be seen as contributing to the disintegration of Yugoslavia and thus it waited for the international response first. In the words of deputy prime minister Erdal Inonu, 'Turkey always avoided activities which would lead to the disintegration of Yugoslavia and kept the way open for dialogue with all parties.'[28] However, once it became evident that the country was on the path to disintegration, and that the project of a 'greater Serbia' would be implemented at the expense of the Bosnian Muslims and Croats, Turkey's policy changed. This policy change became even more evident and essential as the military conflict in Bosnia further evolved into a real human catastrophe amidst growing public pressure.

Having been caught unprepared by the outbreak of the Balkan crisis, Turkey was forced to adopt fast and immediate policies and found itself facing a web of dilemmas regarding how to further respond the crisis. Unilateral intervention by Turkey was out of question for several reasons. To start with, traditional Turkish foreign policy did not favour such an action, especially when it was based on shared religious and cultural values. As such, aggressive interventionist proposals put forward, for example, by president Ozal, were flatly rejected by the government. Indeed, Turkey lacked the political will in this respect and any proposals in favour of more active policies on the grounds of history, religion and culture were largely ignored. Prime minister Demirel ruled out any suggestion that Turkey would act without the UN. 'If the world takes a decision to intervene in Bosnia, Turkey is ready to participate in any kind of operation.

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[27]'Dort Yugoslav Cumhuriyet Tanindi', *Cumhuriyet,* 7 February 1992. Sule Kut, 'Yugoslavya Bunalimi ve Turkiye'nin Bosna-Hersek ve Makedonya Politikasi: 1990-1993' in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi*, Faruk Soylemezoglu (ed.), Second edition, (Istanbul: Der, 1998), pp. 326-7.

[28]'Intensive Diplomatic Traffic in Ankara', *Newspot*, 10 January 1992.

Turkey will act with the world and not on its own.'[29] It was also clear that the possibility of a Turkish intervention into the conflict did not seem likely as it did not have the military capability though it was central to be able to play a 'great power' role as far as regional issues were concerned. Indeed, the Turkish military denied that a unilateral intervention by Turkey had any feasibility whatsoever due to technical difficulties, and in the later stages of the crisis Albania, Macedonia, Greece and Bulgaria declared that they would not open their air space to any unilateral Turkish intervention.[30]

In this respect, Turkey rejected the pleas of Bosnian Muslims to supply weapons on the grounds that Turkey, as a responsible Balkan country and a UN and CSCE member would not supply arms openly or clandestinely.[31] Turkey also acknowledged that a intervening unilaterally could also raise some suspicions about its intentions in the region.[32] Such fears of 'neo-Ottomanism' of were strongly voiced by Serbia, Russia and in particular, Greece who had been preoccupied with the idea that Turkey would attempt to dominate the Balkans.[33] In this context, Turkish participation in the UN peacekeeping force in Bosnia, with about 1,450 troops in 1994, angered the Bosnian Serbs, Serbia and Greece.[34] It should be underlined that technical difficulties and international reaction about a possible Turkish unilateral intervention aside, the civil/military ruling elite in Ankara would not allow for an action as there was no fundamental threat to the country's

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[29]'Prime Minister Demirel's Press Conference, *Newspot*, 28 February 1993; 'Coming around to Turkey's Point on Bosnia', *Turkish Probe,* 15 December 1992, p. 8; Saban Calis and Birol Akgun, 'Catismadan Uzlasmaya: 21. Yuzyila Girerken Balkanlar'da Turk Yunan Rekabeti' in *21. Yuzyilin Esiginde Turk Dis Politikasi*, Idris Bal (ed.), (Istanbul: Alfa, 2001), p. 232.

[30]'Mudahale Olanaksiz', *Cumhuriyet,* 13 December 1992; Mehmet Gonlubol and F. Hakan Bingun, '1990-95 Donemi Turk Dis Politikasi' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi (1919-1995),* (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), p. 686.

[31]See Turkish defence minister's statement, 'Ayaz: Batili Ulkeler Cifte Standartli', *Cumhuriyet,* 23 August 1992; 'Oluler Gonderdiklerinizi Yiyemez', *Cumhuriyet,* 13 July 1992. Ali Fuat Borovali, 'The Bosnian Crisis and Turkish Foreign Policy', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 18, nos. 3-4, (1993), p. 82.

[32]Huseyin Bagci, *Guvenlik Politikalari ve Risk Analizi Cercevesinde Balkanlar 1990-1993,* (Ankara: Dis Politika Enstitusu, 1994), p. 104.

[33]T. Veremis, 'Greek-Turkish Relations and the Balkans', *The South-Eastern Yearbook,* (Athens: The Hellenic Foundation for Defence and Foreign Policy, 1991), pp. 240-1.

[34]'Turkish Peace Keeping Force in Bosnia', *Newspot,* 24 June 1994; *The Independent,* 19 June 1994.

territorial integrity and unity. As discussed earlier, Turkey's pro-active policy during the Gulf War of 1990-91 clearly revealed this fact as the ruling establishment became uneasy in the face of a military involvement. Despite the fact that the Bosnian issue had an apparent strategic importance for the country, in fact domestic pressure was the first and foremost reason behind Turkish involvement. As one Turkish diplomat stated, 'had it not been for the force of public opinion in Turkey, the Bosnian crisis would not have featured as a top priority in Turkish foreign policy. Accordingly, Turkish involvement or relative 'success' in the regional affairs only became with the US's heavy engagement in the Balkans.

As Morton Abramowitz, the former US ambassador to Ankara, noted Turkey remained cautious and tried to prod the West into greater military involvement and humanitarian and multilateral military efforts.[35] Ankara's new policies aimed to end the bloodshed in Bosnia-Herzegovina; to preserve its independence and territorial integrity; and to prevent the involvement of Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, the Sandjak, and Vojvodina in a larger Balkan war.[36] Ankara also sought to ensure the protection of the Bosnian Muslims through various international organisations such as the UN, the CSCE, the BSECP and the OIC, the Council of Europe.[37]

In accordance with the UN Security Council's decision for an embargo against the former Yugoslavia, Turkey froze the country's assets, closed its air space to Yugoslav aircraft and, in May 1992, recalled its ambassador.[38] At the same time, and on several

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[35]Morton I. Abramowitz, 'Dateline Ankara: Turkey after Ozal', *Foreign Policy,* vol. 91, (Summer 1993), p. 169; C. Soraji, 'Islam and Bosnia's Muslim Nation' in *The Changing Shape of the Balkans,* F. W. Carter and H. T. Norris (eds), (London: UCL Press, 1996), p. 60.

[36]Sezer, 'Turkey', *op.cit.,* p. 82.

[37]'UN Approves Turkey's Efforts to Stop Serbian Aggression', *Newspot,* 29 December 1992; 'OIC Foreign Ministers: Extraordinary Meeting on Bosnia-Herzegovina Held in Istanbul', *Newspot,* 18 June 1992; 'KEI Toplantisinda Saraybosna Kaygisi', *Cumhuriyet,* 10 December 1992; Berhan Ekinci, 'Yugoslavya'nin Dagilmasi ve Turkiye' in *Balkanlar,* Ismail Soysal (ed.), (Istanbul: OBIV, 1993), p. 255; Kut, 'Yugoslavya', *op.cit.*, pp. 321-36.

[38]'Turkiye'den Ambargo', *Cumhuriyet,* 3 June 1992.

occasions, the Turkish government stated its opposition to the arms embargo against Bosnian Muslims and demanded the lifting of the ban.[39] In July 1992, Turkey submitted an 'action plan' to the permanent members of the UN Security Council, detailing proposals on to how to deal with the Belgrade government. In it, Turkey proposed limited air raids on the Serbs in Bosnia if they refused to accept a cease-fire and the confiscation of their heavy arms weaponry. The plan also proposed lifting the arms embargo against Bosnian Muslims.[40]

In August 1992, the London Conference opened to a 'rousing condemnation of the Serbs' from nearly two dozen nations. Moreover, with the exception of Turkey there were virtually no calls for action beyond tightening economic sanctions. As foreign minister Hikmet Cetin noted at that time, from the onset of the Bosnian crisis Turkey had consistently drawn attention to the necessity of limited air offensives to stop Serbian aggression, 'There is nothing left to do. The Serbian massacres must be stopped and the only option we have is a limited military operation.'[41] Furthermore, at these forums, Turkey always expressed its readiness to contribute troops to a combined expeditionary force.[42] As deputy prime minister Erdal Inonu explained, 'if necessary we will send troops in case of an intervention under the UN umbrella.'[43] The Turkish parliament also authorised the government to send troops to Bosnia in a unanimous vote (319 to 0) in 1992.[44] This was the first time since the Korean War of 1950 that Turkey was openly

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[39]'Turkiye Bosna'ya Silah Istiyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 3 November 1992. Meltem Muftuler-Bac, *Turkey's Relations With A Changing Europe,* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 49.

[40]'Sirplara Askeri Onlem', *Cumhuriyet,* 6 August 1992; *Newspot,* 13 August 1992; For the details of the proposal see, Sedat Aral, 'Balkan'larda Surekli Kan Akiyor', *Nokta,* 23 August 1992, pp. 68-71; Irfan C. Acar, *Dis Politika,* (Ankara: Sevinc, 1993), p. 14.

[41]'The Address of the Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin at the London Conference', *Newspot,* 10 September 1992.

[42]Jonathan Rugman, 'Turkey Offers 1000 Troops for UN Force', *The Guardian,* 17 August 1992.

[43]*Newspot,* 16 July 1992.

[44]*Newspot,* 17 December 1992.

declaring its willingness to join an international force.[45]

Moreover, Turkey convened a Balkan conference in Istanbul in November 1992 in which all the Balkan states, except Greece and the new Yugoslavia, took part. This was viewed as a diplomatic success as the participants supported Turkey's basic policies on Bosnia.[46] Turkey also strongly advocated a Croat-Muslim alliance against Serbian forces suggesting that clashes between Croats and Bosnian Muslims in central Bosnia would only strengthen the hand of the Serbs, and the likelihood of achieving their objective of a 'greater Serbia'. This was also acknowledged by Croatia during an official visit by its president Franjo Tudjman to Ankara in May 1993.[47]

Although the scholar William Hale has argued that Turkey's efforts to influence western policy can be said 'to have been successful, to the extent that the western powers might not have paid as much attention to the plight of the Bosnian Muslims if Turkey, like other Muslim countries, had not pushed it onto their agenda', it is difficult to claim that there was, at least in the beginning, a clear European policy on the issue.[48] Initially, there was a fundamental disagreement among the major European powers over the policies to be implemented in the Balkans and the US intervention was a long delayed one, or as Van Baar has noted, 'the Americans were not willing and [the] Europeans were not able to do the job.'[49] This was perceived in Turkey as Western indifference, which in

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[45]Kemal Kirisci, 'The End of the Cold War and Changes in Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 18, nos. 3-4, (1993), p. 2 and pp. 16-9.

[46]For the conference see, 'Ankara'nin Diplomatik Basarisi', *Cumhuriyet,* 27 November 1992; 'Balkan Solidarity', *Newspot,* 3 December 1992.

[47]Semih D. Idiz, 'Tudjman in Ankara', *Turkish Probe,* 4 May 1993, p. 12; 'Demirel: Those who Prepare Peace Plans Should be Responsible for the Results', *Newspot,* 22 July 1994.

[48]William Hale, 'Turkish Foreign Policy After the Cold War', *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies,* vol. 1, (1993), p. 248.

[49]Hans van den Broek, former Dutch foreign minister and vice-president of the EC Commission, noted, 'Europe's divisions have only helped convince the Serbs that they have nothing to worry about.' *International Herald Tribune,* 18 January 1993; Jed C. Snyder, 'Proliferation Threats to Security in NATO's Southern Region', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 4, no. 1, (Winter 1993), p. 108; Dirk J. Van Baar, 'The Balkans and Turkey: A European Sideshow' in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order,* Gunay G. Ozdogan and Kemali Saybasili (eds.), (Istanbul: Eren, 1995), pp. 323-5; 'Bush'un Bosnaya Mudahaleye Niyeti Yok', *Cumhuriyet,* 10 August 1992; Bert Wayne, *The Reluctant*

turn increased anti-Western feelings.[50]

It was clear from the very beginning that being only a middle power, the degree of its influence over the developments was bound to be limited, or as much as its level of power permitted. Indeed, as the conflict developed into a full-scale war, it became apparent that Turkey did not have the capability or power to influence the ongoing developments beyond its borders other than by relying on multilateral efforts which proved ineffective and therefore fell short in meeting Ankara's expectations. This led to anger and disappointment as well as anti-western sentiments among the Turkish populace and put Turkish policy-makers in Ankara in a difficult position as they faced a classic dilemma of reconciling internal political pressures with external realities.[51] Extreme nationalism and political Islam increasingly gained momentum at the expense of mainstream pro-western moderate groups, as the western approach to the Bosnian crisis was compared with the Azeri-Armenian war, the Kurdish issue and the Chechnya war. For example, Muhsin Yazicioglu, the leader of the nationalist Great Union Party (Buyuk Birlik Partisi, BBP) and one of the most prominent leaders of the nationalist movement in Turkey, asserted that the reason for Washington's reluctance to intervening the crisis from the very beginning was that it could not persuade the Christian West to take firm action to protect the Muslims.[52] Similarly, Erbakan declared that if his party came to power, it would do the same in Bosnia as Turkey did in Cyprus, recalling the Turkish military intervention in 1974 when he was deputy prime minister. 'The West that destroyed Saddam will not intervene in this conflict this time because they have no real interest. Iran, Pakistan and

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Superpower: United States' Policy in Bosnia 1991-95, (New York: Westview Press, 1997), p. 153.

[50]Ersan Kalaycioglu, 'The Logic of Contemporary Turkish Politics', *Journal,* no. 3, (September 1997), p. 5; Kenneth Mackenzie, 'Turkey's Circumspect Activism', *The World Today,* (February 1993), p. 26; J. F. Brown, 'Turkey: Back to the Balkans' in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China,* Graham Fuller (ed.), (Oxford: Westview, 1993), p. 154; Kemali Saybasili, 'Introduction' in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order,* Gunay G. Ozdogan and Kemali Saybasili (eds.), (Istanbul: Eren, 1995), p. 19.

[51]William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000,* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 260.

Saudi Arabia all helped Bosnia but not Turkey.'[53]

6.2. The Kosovo crisis: More turmoil in the Balkans

Instability in the Balkans began with the disintegration of former Yugoslavia but culminated with the Kosovo crisis of the late 1990s. Events in Kosovo underscored the lack of effective mechanisms available to contain potential crises in the new era in a volatile region.[54] Even the successful NATO operations against the Serbs towards the end of the Bosnian war did not deter the Belgrade regime from launching another large-scale ethnic cleansing campaign against the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo. As in the case of Bosnia, Turkey was once more was drawn into the Balkan conflagration. Additionally, rising domestic pressure to protect the Kosovar Muslims and an adverse affect on Turkey's foreign trade combined with Greece's pro-Serbian ties and the potential refugee crisis all played an important role in Turkey's approach to Kosovo.[55] Finally, the existence of a Turkish minority in Kosovo, which was estimated at between 9,000-15,000 (though it has been claimed by the Turkish foreign ministry that this figure was no less than 60,000 at the time) was another reason that Turkey felt obliged to take a more active role.[56]

Essentially, the conflict in Kosovo distracted Turkish attention away from focusing on establishing stronger economic and political relations with the region and once more forced Turkish foreign and security policy to preoccupy itself with formulating policies

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[52]Interview with Muhsin Yazicioglu, *ibid.*, p. 294.

[53]'Erbakan: Hukumet Katliama Seyirci Kaliyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 23 August 1992.

[54]For example, Sandjak in Serbia and Montenegro has been seeking for independence for some time, which could be another flash point after Kosovo in the years ahead. Oya A. Mughisuddin, 'The Balkans in Transition: Old Conflicts, New Dimensions, *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 18, nos. 3-4, (1993), pp. 106-11; Milan Andrejevich, 'The Sandjak: The Next Balkan Theatre of War?', *RFE/RL Research Report,* vol. 1, no. 47, (27 November 1992), p. 26.

[55]For example, 1,300 Turkish lorries were driven to Yugoslavia a year before, no Turkish lorry travelled to this country since the crisis. *Anadolu Ajansi,* 24 May 1999.

[56]Interview with the Turkish ambassador to Tirana, *Zaman,* 20 May 1999; Aydin Babuna, 'Kosova Sorunu Uzerine', *Dis Politika,* vol. 10, (1999), p. 6; Şule Kut, 'Turks of Kosovo: What to Expect?', *Perceptions,* vol. 5, no. 3 (Sept-Nov. 2000); *Statement on the Clashes in Kosovo,* Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 29 December 1998.

on how to resolve the conflict.[57]

In contrast to its public diplomatic efforts during the Bosnian conflict, Turkey pursued a low profile role in the Kosovo war and did not take up the issue in various international organisations. It especially distanced itself from the military option. The ethnic Albanian lobby in Turkey accused Ankara of pursuing an overly cautious policy toward the Kosovo issue.[58] Hadi Uluengin in his column in the Istanbul daily *Hurriyet* criticised Turkey's ineffective stance and questioned its lack of political will to protect the Kosovar Muslims, 'we are so occupied with other trivial issues that we do not seem to be aware of the fact that we are being driven out of Europe with every single Kosovar who is either being killed or made a refugee. Kosovo is the legacy of our Ottoman past, culture, faith and honour.'[59]

As a general policy, Turkey adopted a cautious approach with respect to the Kosovo issue, emphasising its opposition to engaging in policies purely based on ethnic and religious ties[60], and supported the talks between Serbia and the ethnic Albanian groups for a negotiated political solution.[61] However, in the face of events in Kosovo, Ankara altered its previous position and supported international efforts to end Serbian advances stressing the necessity of a military operation and declaring its readiness to participate.[62] Turkish president Demirel declared, 'those oppressed in Kosovo are Muslim Turks and Albanians, thus in an operation which aims to save our kinsmen, Turkey cannot follow a policy of

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[57]*Cumhuriyet,* 23 January, 6 May and 10 October 1996; Sule Kut, 'Turkish Policy toward the Balkans' in *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 81.

[58]Kut, 'Turkish', *op.cit.*, p. 76.

[59]Hadi Uluengin, 'Turban, Tumor ve Gundem', *Hurriyet,* 15 May 1999.

[60]*Turkish Daily News,* 15 October 1992; Baskin Oran, 'Turkiye'nin Balkan ve Kafkas Politikasi', *AUSBFD,* vol. 50, nos. 1-2, (January-June 1995), p. 273.

[61]For the peace negotiations see, Marc Weller, 'The Rambouillet Conference on Kosovo', *International Affairs,* vol. 75, no, 2, (April 1999), pp. 211-51.

[62]*Sabah,* 1 February 1999 and *Aksam*, 4 March 1999.

indifference.'[63] The ethnic cleansing perpetrated against the Kosovars was reminiscent of the atrocities that had been formerly witnessed in Bosnia.[64] In short time, Serb forces drove 300,000 Kosovar Albanians from their homes.[65] Even the NATO strikes on Yugoslavia in March 1999 did not stop the Serb forces in Kosovo from rounding up ethnic Albanians and expelling them.[66] This resulted in Europe's worst refugee crisis since the end of the Second World War as 90 per cent of an estimated 1.6 million ethnic Albanians were refugees.[67] It was estimated that 800,000 refugees fled to Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro or were evacuated to other countries, and some 600,000 were displaced within the province.[68]

With the launch of NATO air strikes following the failure of the peace talks in early 1999, Turkey contributed sixteen of its F16 fighter planes, which first flanked NATO warplanes in raids over Yugoslavia and then took part in NATO attacks.[69] Furthermore, Turkey opened bases in the west of the country to NATO warplanes for attacks on Yugoslavia.[70] Additionally, some 1,000 Turkish soldiers joined the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo.[71] Later, Ankara also sent 126 troops to Albania to help to co-ordinate the handling of the refugee crisis.[72] Turkey also received around 20,000

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[63]Sedat Ergin, 'Demirel: Bombaliyoruz', *Hurriyet,* 21 May 1999.

[64]For the origins and dynamics of the crisis in the post-Yugoslavia see, Glenny Misha, *The Rebirth of History: Eastern Europe in the Age of Democracy,* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 136; Reginald Hibbert, 'Raising the Stakes', *The World Today,* vol. 55, no: 5, (May 1999), p. 7; Irfan K. Ulger, 'Sirplar'a Gore Kosova Sorunu', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 4, no. 1- 2, (Spring-Summer 1998), p. 168; Enver Hasan, 'Politik ve Hukuki Acidan Kosova Krizi', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 4, nos. 1-2, (Spring-Summer 1998), pp. 126-7.

[65]*The Wall Street Journal,* 6 August 1996; Athanassopoulou Ekavi, 'Hoping for the Best Planning for the Worst: Conflict in Kosovo', *The World Today,* vol. 52, nos: 8-9, (August-September 1996), p. 226; Chris Hedges, 'Kosovo's Next Masters', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 78, no. 3, (May-June 1999), pp. 24-42; 'Road out of Hell', *The Times,* 1 October 1998.

[66]*The Economist,* 20 and 27 March 1999.

[67]*The Guardian,* 29 March 1999; *The Economist,* 3 April 1999, p. 11; *The Economist,* 8 May 1999, p. 42.

[68]*US Department of State,* Washington DC, May 1999; *The Washington Post,* 11 May 1999; *The Independent,* 12 May 1999; 'Erasing Ethnicity: Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo', *The Economist,* 15 May 1999, p. 48.

[69]*Statement on Kosovo,* Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 12 May 1999; *Cumhuriyet,* 25 May 1999.

[70]*Hurriyet,* 26 April 1999.

[71]'Turkish Troops Head for Kosovo'; *BBC News,* 1 July 1999; *Aksam,* 21 June 1999.

[72]*Sabah,* 13 May 1999; *Hurriyet,* 31 May 1999.

refugees and helped to establish refugee camps in Albania and Macedonia for another 20,000.[73] According to the Turkish defence minister, Turkey sent the most humanitarian aid to the Kosovars worth US$4 million and spent another US$14 million on the refugee camps in Turkey, Albania and Macedonia.[74] In this context, as the refugee problem reached crisis point, various state and non-governmental organisations initiated fund-raising campaigns across the country and raised donations worth millions of dollars.[75] It was also reported that wounded Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) members were treated at Turkish hospitals in Turkey and Kosovar refugees were enrolled at Turkish universities.[76]

Like the Bosnian war, the Kosovo crisis had several implications for Turkish foreign and security policy. Firstly, it destabilised the region making it difficult for Turkey to foster relations with the Balkan countries on the pretence of common ethnic and religious grounds because to do so would have caused an immediate backlash from regional competitors like Greece. Secondly, a reduced and crippled Kosovo automatically meant a reduced Turkish presence and influence in the region, as Kosovo was a natural ally for Turkey in the region. Thirdly, Turkey found itself faced with the Bosnian and Kosovo war. This seriously prevented it from developing and executing pro-active foreign policies in the region as opposed to containment policies.

6.3. A new Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans: Discovery of new allies

As a result of its imperial past spanning over four centuries Turkey has common historical, cultural, linguistic and ethnic links with the Balkans region. More importantly, owing to these ties, domestic factors also forced Ankara to take a high profile role towards the developments occurring in those countries during the period under study.

In particular, Turkey sought to utilise the potential emerging market opportunities for

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[73]'Kosovo', *Newspot*, no. 14, 1999.
[74]*Turkiye*, 11 May 1999..
[75]*Hurriyet*, 6 April 1999.
[76]'Wounded KLA Guerrillas Treated in Turkey', *Turkish Daily News*, 17 May 1999. *Anadolu Ajansi*, 17 June 1999.

Turkish goods.[77] Turkish citizens of Balkan origin who own hundreds of small and medium-size companies especially in the western part of Turkey also contributed to the Turkish economic policy in the region as they actively worked for the improvement of inter-regional trade.[78] As in Caucasia and Central Asia, many non-governmental organisations and various private investors quickly established a number of cultural and educational centres including Turkish schools in the Balkans. Such organisations also proved successful in establishing themselves in the media sector as well.[79]

This aided to improve Turkey's ties with Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia, while Bulgaria, and, especially, Macedonia, despite their Christian Orthodoxy links, did not join the Greek-Serb coalition. In fact, as will be discussed later Athens's dealings with Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania and the support it gave to Serbia during the Yugoslav crisis strongly encouraged these states to improve relations with Turkey and it was only in the second half of the 1990s that Athens attempted to restore relations with its Balkan neighbours of Macedonia and Albania and to intensify cooperation with Bulgaria and Romania impacted on Turkey's Balkan policies, especially in the economic field.

Moreover, regional countries also faced severe internal challenges in the face of a weak democratic tradition and socio-economic realities, which made the implementation of Turkish policies difficult. Additionally, as will be discussed in the coming chapter, Greece as a main regional rival, further hampered the Turkish efforts in this respect. Turkey's limited economic capacity to extend sizeable aid and credits to the region and a growing interest in the Turkic republics and Russia, which in turn diverted scant resources was another factor in Turkey's relatively limited success, particularly in the

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[77]For example, by 1994, in Romania only Turkish firms numbered around 2,500. In 1999, this was 5,600 and they made investments worth US$1.2 billion. The trade balance between the two countries reached a maximum level in 1998 with US$813 million. *Newspot,* 7 April 1994 and *Aksam*, 8 July 1999.

[78]Turan Aydin 'Turkey's Rising Economic Capacity', *Perceptions,* vol. 1, no. 3, (September-November 1996), p. 146.

economic field, in achieving closer ties to the Balkans. Thus, having lacked economic capability meant Turkey missed the opportunity to exert greater influence, albeit indirectly, in the form of aid and large investment schemes, and it was quickly filled by other regional and non-regional powers, i.e. Greece in particular and other EU countries such as Germany and Italy. For example, although Turkey provided political support to Bosnia from the very onset of the conflict, economic ties lagged far behind political-military support. Turkey granted a mere US$26 million Eximbank credits (it had originally offered US$80 million). Thus, the prospects of expanding economic relations remained low and bilateral trade remained insignificant whilst the leading EU countries increasingly dominated the country's economy.[80] For example, as of 2000, trade with Turkey was less than 1 per cent of Bosnia's overall trade while trade with Italy and Germany alone accounted for more than 25 percent.[81] In the same way, Turkish firms have not been represented to any significant extent in post-war reconstruction of Bosnia.

Additionally, Greece was quick to reap the benefits of its policy change towards the regional countries as it looked to enhance its economic expansion. Greece viewed advanced economic ties as the main instrument by which to exert more political influence in the Balkans. As the only EU member in the region, Greece clearly benefited from its position as a natural bridge for western multinational companies in the area. Accordingly, Greece developed into the main investor in Albania, Macedonia and Bulgaria, all countries regarded as Turkey's close allies.[82] By the year of 2000, total Greek investments reached nearly US$3 billion and Greek exports accounted for more than 20

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[79]For example, the Istanbul-based Turkish daily *Zaman* was being circulated in these countries in both Turkish and local languages.

[80]Ilhan Uzgel, 'The Balkans: Turkey's Stabilising Role' in *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power*, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci (eds), (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 54.

[81]http://www.komorabih.com/en/economybih/foreigntrade.html.

[82]See, Charalambos Tsardanidis and Evangelos Karafotakis, 'Greece's Economic Diplomacy Towards the Balkan Countries', *Perceptions*, vol. 5, no. 3, (September-November 2000).

percent of the region's trade, while only 2.6 percent of Turkey's total external trade was with the Balkan countries and Turkish investments accounted for only just over US$1 billion.[83]

Improving relations with Bulgaria

Fearing that a Greek-Serbian-Bulgarian Orthodox block in the Balkan Peninsula could threaten Turkey, it attached much importance to developing its relationship with Bulgaria. Bulgaria generally resisted such a grouping and followed a balanced policy that was to an extent favourable to Turkey's interests in the Balkans. This was aided by the existence of more than one million Turks in Bulgaria (one-tenth of the whole population)[84] and Bulgaria's post-Cold War efforts to make up for the bitter memories of the mid-1980s, which saw of around 300,000 of Bulgaria's population flee Turkey in 1990 in respect to Bulgaria's disastrous policy of forced assimilation of its ethnic Turkish minority.[85] In fact, the return of approximately 150,000 Turks to Bulgaria after the Sofia government's decision to halt the campaign reflected the level of cordial relations between the two neighbours.[86] Although new equal rights for the hitherto oppressed Turkish minority aroused deep-seated nationalist sentiment among large numbers of Bulgarians, and led to nationalist strikes at the beginning of 1990, which were exacerbated by worsening economic conditions,[87] new democratic rights also facilitated the representation of the

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[83]Ilhan Uzgel, 'Balkanlarla Iliskiler' in *Turk Dis Politikasi,* Baskin Oran (ed.), vol. 2, (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2002), pp. 513-8.

[84]Ali Eminov, *Turkish and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria,* (London: Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs, 1997), pp. 79-81; Anna Krasteva, 'Bulgaristan'in Etno-Kulturel Panoramasi', *Dis Politika,* vol. 6, no, 2, pp. 97-114; Huseyin Memisoglu, 'Bulgaristan ve Bulgaristan Turk Azinlik Sorunu' in *Tarihi Gelismeler Icinde Turkiye'nin Sorunlari Sempozyumu (Dun-Bugun-Yarin),* (Ankara: TTK, 1990), pp. 115-25.

[85]Bulgaria denied Turkish minority and re-labelled them 'Bulgarians of Muslim Faith' see, Jonothan Eyal, 'Managing Balkans' in *Rusi and Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1992,* (London: RUSI, 1992), p. 82; Imbroglio Balkan, 'Turkish Uncertainties: Domestic and Foreign Policy Identities in the 1990s' in *Politics and Security in South-Eastern Europe,* Daniel N. Nelson (ed.), (Colorado: Westview, 1991), pp. 98-9. During his visit to Ankara in 1997, Bulgarian President Peter Stayonov apologised for Bulgaria's policy under the communist rule. *Radikal,* 29 July 1997.

[86]Omer Turan, 'Bulgaristan Turkleri'nin Bugunku Durumu', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), p. 296.

[87]'Post-Communist Balkans: The First Phase', *Strategic Survey 1990-91,* (London: Brassey's for the IISS,

Turkish population in the Bulgarian parliament, which in turn helped to contribute to the improvement of Turkish-Bulgarian relations.[88]

In the military arena, Turkey signed an assistance and training agreement with Bulgaria, and for the first time in their history, the two countries' armies joined forces in military manoeuvres organised by Bulgaria.[89] As a gesture of good will, Turkey decided to withdraw two army divisions from the Turco-Bulgarian border in 1992 and both countries signed another military agreement in 1996, which called for the exchange of military advisors.[90] The two countries signed a further defence industry cooperation agreement, to include the joint production of weapons systems, the repair of military vehicles and the promotion of the sale of products to third countries.[91]

Relations also evolved in the economic field as Turkey granted Bulgaria a US$175 million credit and supplied oil and electricity to Bulgaria when it had difficulties meeting its needs during the Gulf crisis of 1990.[92] The two countries also concluded a number of economic, industrial and technical co-operation agreements which saw the abolition of the customs tariff and (with the participation of Romania) they agreed to establish a tri-partite free trade and economic zone in 1999.[93] This provided the basis for the entry of over 2,000 Turkish companies that now operate in Bulgaria.[94] The overall trade volume between the two countries exceeded half a billion dollars in 1999, a five-fold increase

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1991), p. 169; *Aksiyon,* 9-15 November 1996, p. 64; *Turkish-German Round Table Meeting,* (Ankara: SAM, 1996), p. 16.

[88]'Turkler Politikaya Ortak', *Cumhuriyet,* 23 October 1992. For a in-depth discussion on Turkish minority see, Hakan Evrensel, 'Bulgaristan'daki Turk Azinlik', *Strateji,* no. 3, (1995), pp. 9-30, especially pp. 25-7; Huseyin Memisoglu, 'Bulgaristan'da Demokrasi ve Yasalar', *Dis Politika Bulteni,* vol. 3, no. 2, (September 1991), pp. 48-53.

[89]'Turkiye Bulgaristan ile Askeri Isbirligine Gidiyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 1 April 1992; 'Turkey's Bulgarian Boost', *Turkish Probe,* 8 July 1994, p. 15.

[90]*Newspot,* 2 July 1992; *Milliyet,* 26 January 1996.

[91]'Turco-Bulgarian Defence Industry Cooperation', *Newspot,* 29 March 1993.

[92]'Turco-Bulgarian Economic Cooperation Developing', *Newspot,* 5 December 1991.

[93]'Demirel: Past Crisis Only Strengthened Turco-Bulgarian Friendship', *Newspot,* 8 July 1994; 'Bulgaria, Turkey and Romania Set Up Free Trade Zone', *Capital Weekly*, issue no: 10, 13-19 March 1999.

[94]For the economic relations see, Nurcan Ozgur, '1989 Sonrasi Turkiye-Bulgaristan Iliskileri' in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi,* Faruk Sonmezoglu (ed.), Second edition, (Istanbul: Der, 1998), pp. 383-8.

from 1990 (of this Turkish exports amounted to US$213 million), making Turkey the eighth largest importer into Bulgaria.[95] Turkey was also the tenth biggest investor with US$160 million. Over the same period, however Greece became the leading trade and investment partner of Bulgaria, well ahead of Turkey. By late 1990s, Greece was Bulgaria's second-largest foreign investor as total Greek investments exceeded US$850 million, while bilateral trade amounted to over US$700 million (Greek exports account for US$411 million, twice that of Turkey).[96] Thus, overall, in the post-Cold War era, Turkey developed and sustained a good relationship with Bulgaria.

A new ally: Macedonia

Like Bulgaria, Macedonia also became a corner stone of Turkey's Balkan policy. From Ankara's perspective, a stable and strong Macedonia suited Turkish interests in the Balkans as a reliable ally and a counter-weight to possible Greek and Serbian designs. In turn, for Macedonia, close diplomatic links with Turkey served to balance the same threats.[97] Moreover, Macedonia's vulnerable position in the face of internal and external threats and the wider implications of a possible break-up of the whole Balkan region also became an issue for Turkey. The existence of an ethnic Turkish minority numbering around 80,000, (4% of the population and the third largest ethnic group in Macedonia) and the large and influential population of immigrant Macedonian Turks, also played an important part in Turkey's policy towards Macedonia.[98]

Although Macedonia gained its independence peacefully in 1991, successfully stayed out of the Yugoslav war, secured 'inter-ethnic peace' and attempted democratic and

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[95]*Sabah*, 13 May 1999.

[96]Sabah, 13 August 1999;
http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/balkans/Bulgaria.html

[97]Duncan M. Perry, 'Macedonia: A Balkan Problem and a European Dilemma, *RFE/RL Research Report,* vol. 1, no. 25, (19 June 1992), p. 41.

[98]See, Serafettin Yucelden, 'Yugoslavya Turkleri' *Turk Dunyasi El Kitabi,* (Ankara: Turk Kulturunu Arastirma Enstitusu 1976), vol. 1, no. 45, pp. 1094-5; Hugh Poulton, 'Non-Albanian Muslim Minorities in Macedonia' in *The New Macedonian Question',* James Pettifer (ed.), (Hampshire and New York:

economic reforms, its fragile ethnic composition, with half a million Muslims (the vast majority Albanians) in a total population of about two million, continued to be a potential threat to stability.[99] Indeed, the rising Albanian ethnic population caused serious tensions among the Macedonian Slav majority, and this in turn resulted in growing Macedonian nationalism.[100]

Apart from domestic ethnic tensions, there were several other external factors that made Macedonia even more vulnerable to instability, and which also convinced the Skopje government to foster closer relations with Turkey. For example, international recognition of Macedonia had been blocked by Greece, as Athens feared that a future revival of territorial claims on Greek Macedonia by a Macedonian state will be unavoidable.[101] In this framework, Greece imposed a blockade on Macedonia, which effected 70% of its exports, while it had already lost its major trade partner, Yugoslavia, following the UN sanctions against the latter.[102] Bulgaria, on the other hand, insisted that Macedonian history was an integral part of Bulgarian national history and that Macedonia's language was a variant of Bulgarian.[103] Furthermore, Serbia, for historical

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Macmillan, 1999), pp. 117-9.

[99]Duncan M. Perry, 'The Republic of Macedonia and the Odds for Survival', *RFE/RL Research Report,* vol. 1, no. 46, (20 November 1992), p. 14; Hugh Poulton, 'The Republic of Macedonia after UN Recognition', *RFE/RL Research Report,* vol. 2, no. 23, (4 June 1993), pp. 22-30; Emilija Simoska, 'Macedonia: a View on the Inter-Ethnic Relations', *Perceptions,* vol. 2, no. 2, (June-August 1997), pp. 93-103; *The Republic of Macedonia: Facts and Figures,* (Skopje: Macedonian Information and Liaison Service, 1993), p. 8; Misha Glenny, 'Heading Off War in the Southern Balkans', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 74, no. 3, (May-June 1995), p. 99.

[100]*The Republic of Macedonia,* (Skopje: GIT Goce Delcev, 1993), pp. 25-6; Isa Blumi, 'Makedonya'da Kimlik, Diplomasi ve Arnavut Sorunu "Yagmur Yagacak mi?"', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 4, nos. 1-2, (Spring-Summer 1998), pp. 158-9. Brown, 'Turkey', *op.cit.,* p. 147. 'Rising Ghosts', *The Economist,* 26 July 1997.

[101]'Atina'nin Makedonya Kavgasi', *Cumhuriyet,* 18 February 1992; *The Economist,* 1 August 1992; For Greek foreign policy towards Macedonia see, Evangelos Kofos, 'Greek Policy Considerations over FYROM Independence and Recognition' in *The New Macedonian Question',* James Pettifer (ed.), (Hampshire and New York: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 226-262; Cosmos M. Megalommatis, 'The Political Evolutions in the Balkans, Greek-Balkan Relations and Turkey' in *Balkanlar, Kafkasya ve Ortadogu'da Gelismeler ve Turkiye,* Erol Manisali (ed.), (Istanbul: Kibris Arastirmalari Vakfi, 1994), pp. 49-52.

[102]*Central European,* March 1994, p. 2; 'Economic and Ethnic Woes Endanger Macedonia as Serbia', *International Herald Tribune,* 10 April 1995; Paris Varvaroussis, 'Macedonia: Focus of Greek Policy towards the Balkans', *Aussen Politik,* vol. 46, no. 4, (1995), pp. 360-1.

[103]*The Economist,* 24 January 1998, p. 16; S. Tufan, *Self-Determination and the Viability of Macedonia as*

reasons, considered Macedonia an integral part of Serbia, and also regarded Macedonians as being of Serbian ethnic origin in the view of its Slav language and majority Orthodox population.[104] In this context, the UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPRDEP) was invited into Macedonia in 1993 to defuse any possible Serbian aggression.[105] All in all, external pressures, particularly the Greek factor urged the Skopje government to seek more economic and political help from Ankara. For example, in 1991 the Macedonian president Kiro Gligorov made his first visit abroad to Turkey to appeal for economic and political support.[106]

Turkey first showed diplomatic support by recognising Macedonia in February 1992.[107] It also became the first country to establish a diplomatic mission in Skopje.[108] Turkey also offered to play a mediatory role between Tirana and Skopje over the increasingly unstable Albanian minority issue. In addition, Turkey raised its concerns over Macedonia's security at various international forums, lobbied for international recognition and supported Macedonian membership to NATO. While Greece particularly used the EU to block the recognition of the Skopje government.[109] The two countries finalised a military co-operation agreement and joint military exercises were held in 1997, the first initiative of its kind for nearly a century.[110] This was followed by Turkey's decision to give 20 of its F-5s fighter planes to the Macedonian army force.[111] Furthermore, Ankara supplied oil and humanitarian assistance to Macedonia to ease the economic crisis that it suffered in 1991 and 1992 in the face of the embargo on

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an Independent State, unpublished MA thesis, (London: University of Westminster, 1995), p. 41.

[104]Stefan Troebst, 'Macedonia: Powder Keg Defused', *RFE/RL Research Report,* vol. 3, no. 4, (28 January 1994), p. 34.

[105]*The Times,* 29 March 1999.

[106]'Macedonian President Gligorov Visits Ankara', *Newspot,* 11 July 1991; 'Macedonian Deputy Premier : We Believe Turkey Will Help Us', *Newspot,* 9 March 1994.

[107]'Dort Yugoslav Cumhuriyet Tanindi', *Cumhuriyet,* 7 February 1992.

[108]'Turkiyenin Yeni Buyukelcilikleri', *Cumhuriyet,* 14 October 1992.

[109]'FM Cem Stresses Importance of Macedonia's NATO membership', *Turkish Daily News,* 21 April 1998.

[110]*Hurriyet,* 12 May 1997.

Yugoslavia, structural difficulties in the economy, the lack of international aid and Greek sanctions.[112]

Although a trade and economic cooperation and a free trade agreements were signed between Turkey and Macedonia in 1994 and 1998 respectively, progress in the economic field did not reflect political ties. Bilateral trade remained at around US$80 million for much of this period. In simple terms, Turkey lacked the economic resources to provide the kind of economic assistance Macedonia needed, and which would have made it the primary economic actor in Macedonia. Thus, the Turkish Eximbank credit worth US$25 million fell for short of expectations despite calls from the Skopje government for more Turkish economic involvement, leaving opportunity for others.[113] For example, the Macedonian government offered Turkish businessmen the first option to enter new privatisation projects in the country on favourable terms,[114] but unable to take up these projects, Greece became the biggest foreign investor in the country and the second largest trade partner of the country after Germany. For example, about 90% percent of the foreign capital investment came from Greece and Greek companies either taken over, or were in the final stages of assuming control of a number of vital sectors of the Macedonian economy, including construction, tobacco, oil and banking.[115] As of 1999, Greek exports to Macedonia were US$425 million while Turkish exports accounted for only US$63 million.

A full-fledged alliance with Albania

From a Turkish perspective, Albania was a natural ally to balance Serbia and, in particular, Greek endeavours to expand influence in the region. In this context, the

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[111]Umit Enginsoy, 'Turkey to give F-5s to Macedonia', *Defence News,* 13 July 1998.

[112]'Turkish Red Crescent Aid to Turkish Republics, Russia, Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina', *Newspot,* 18 June 1992.

[113]'Turkish-Macedonian Agreement', *Newspot,* 23 March 1994; Uzgel, 'The Balkans', *op.cit,* pp. 59-62.

[114]*Cumhuriyet,* 22 April 1996.

[115]http://www.aimpress.org/dyn/trae/archive/data/200002/00203-006-trae-sko.htm.

existence of a large group of Turkish citizens of Albanian origin played an important role. Especially following the decision of the Albanian leadership to undertake reforms and to end its policy of international isolation, Albania held its first free elections in 1991 ending fifty years of communist rule and established closer political and economic relations with the neighbouring Balkan states as well as the Western world.[116] This promptly led to a natural interaction between the peoples of Turkey and Albania where 70 per cent of Albania's three million strong population are Muslim.

Despite Albania's expanding economic and diplomatic relationship with the outside world, and welcome economic reforms, it remained the poorest country in Europe during this period.[117] This caused serious unrest and brought the country to the brink of a civil war in 1997, which in turn magnified the threat to the wider stability of the Balkans.[118] While the existence of a poor Albanian community in northern Greece, and the latter's territorial claims over the southern part of Albania as part of Greater Hellas, also led to tense relations with Athens.[119] Indeed, Greece used its veto to block EU aid to Albania.[120] Moreover, ethnic Albanians living outside the existing Albanian national borders (totalling more than 2 million people), notably in Macedonia and Kosovo, aspired to a closer relationship, or even unity with Tirana, although Albania's own economic and political shortcomings did not favour the realisation of a 'greater Albania.'[121] These nationalist movements, however, contributed to the deterioration of Albania's relations with Serbia and Macedonia despite the fact that the Tirana government accepts

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[116]Esat Oz and Ceren Sarisaltik 'Arnavutluk'ta Demokrasiye Gecis Sureci', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 1, no. 1, (Spring 1994), pp. 151-7; Miranda Vickers, *The Albanians: A Modern History,* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 1995), pp. 211-15.

[117]'Survey: Albania', *Financial Times,* 21 July 1994, p. 2.

[118]'Albania on the Brink of a Bloodbath', *The Daily Telegraph,* 5 March 1997; Reginald Hibbert', 'Dealing With the Dispossessed', *The World Today,* vol. 53, no. 5, (May 1997), pp. 119-21.

[119]Huseyin Bagci, 'Demokratik Bir Arnavutluk: Turkiye Icin Yeni Bir Ortak', *Strateji,* no. 1, (1995), pp. 40-3.

[120]Nazlan Ertan, 'Will the EU Bosses Try Bringing Greece into Line', *Turkish Probe,* 30 September 1994, p. 9.

[121]Miranda Vickers and James Pettifer, *From Anarchy to a Balkan Identity: Albania,* (London: C. Hurst,

Macedonia as a counterweight to Serbia and Greece. The Kosovo crisis further strained already tense relationship with Serbia.[122] Given Albania's potential for economic and political crisis and its proximity to hostile neighbours (most notably Serbia) the Tirana government asked NATO to help seal its border to prevent the flow of people and weapons to the conflict area given the fact it was unable to guard its borders on its own with a small army numbering 10,000.[123]

In responding to Albania's request, Turkey supplied humanitarian aid consisting of food and basic consumer goods to Albania between 1991 and 1993 totalling US$31 million at a time when the country was severely hit by economic crisis.[124] Additionally, Turkey sent around 800 troops to join the Italian-led contingent and police reinforcements to restore order in Albania following the economic meltdown of April 1997.[125] Membership of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSECP) in 1992 further contributed to the normalisation of the country's foreign relations. Furthermore, Ankara offered technical and training assistance following Tirana's decision to switch to a free market economy and privatisation and helped to set up a telecommunications systems.[126] In 1992, the two countries signed a Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation agreement, by which, Turkey pledged to provide Albania military aid, mainly for officer training and military education and technical assistance to rebuild its military and security forces.[127] In addition, Turkey agreed to provide a US$5 million credit to repair a harbour in Albania, and sent troops to support the project logistically.[128]

1997), p. 167.

[122]For Albania's stance on the Kosovo issue see, interview with the Albanian foreign minister Pascal Milo, *Aksiyon,* 13 June 1998, pp. 48-9.

[123] 'Why Albania Feels Lonely', *The Economist,* 9 May 1998.

[124]'Turkish Red Crescent Aid to Turkish Republics, Russia, Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina', *Newspot,* 18 June 1992.

[125]Fikret Ertan 'Buyuk Hamle', *Zaman,* 16 April 1997; *Hurriyet,* 12 June 1997.

[126]'Albania President Alia Visits Turkey', *Newspot,* 24 October 1991.

[127]'Turco-Albanian Cooperation', *Newspot,* 28 January 1993.

[128]'Balkan'larda Cok Onemli Stratejik Isbirligi', *Aksiyon,* 1 August 1998.

Turkey was also one of the leading supporters of Albania's inclusion in NATO during the alliance's expansion process, with prime minister Ecevit announcing that Turkey would support Albania because it was 'encircled by danger.'[129] The cordial nature of relations became even more visible during the Kosovo crisis as the Tirana government repeatedly sought Turkey's help against Serbian attacks on Albanians, much to the appreciation of Albanian leadership.[130]

However, once more bilateral economic ties did not match the level of politico-military relations, despite Albania's desire for Turkish economic aid and investment. Although, Turkish companies found Albania a promising market, they soon had to face strong competition from Italian, and later, Greek firms. Thus, trade between the two countries remained insignificant. The credits extended to Albania worth US$53.5 million (only US$15 million of it was released by the end of 1999) was not sufficient in this respect. Greece, on the other hand, became Albania's second largest trade partner after Italy, with imports from Greece accounting for more than a third of the country's overall imports. As of 2000, Albania's overall trade with these two countries accounted for 82 and 65 percent respectively. Albania's import from Turkey were only 6 percent of the total in the same year.[131] Similarly, in the same period Greece's share in overall foreign investment in Albania, particularly in infrastructure, energy, telecommunications, banking and farming sectors, was over 34 percent (Italy controlled 48 percent of the investment) while Turkey's share was a mere 2 percent.[132] Consequently, as in Macedonia, Turkey remained far behind other countries, most notably Greece, in establishing strong economic ties.

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[129]*Aksam*, 4 March 1999.

[130]See the statement of Iskender Gjinushi, the Speaker of the Albanian Parliament, *Hurriyet,* 23 June 1999.

[131]*Arnavutluk Ulke Raporu,* (Ankara: TIKA, 1995), p. 60; *Newspot,* 11 March 1993; Uzgel, 'The Balkans', *op.cit.*, p. 56; http://www.workmall.com/wfb2001/albania/albania_economy.html; Charalambos, *op.cit.*

[132]http://www.oecd.org/pdf/M00032000/M00032256.pdf

6.4. The Black Sea Economic Co-operation Project: A Turkish diplomatic success?

Turkey also looked to multilateral economic schemes with the countries of the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Caucasus. In particular it initiated the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Project (BSECP). Although Turkey strongly rejected claims that the project was a substitute for the EU and thereby was evidence of the reorientation of its foreign policy following its exclusion from the EU membership track, the frustration with Brussels was obvious and made a regional multilateral framework.[133] Turkey hoped that the introduction of such co-operation among the regional countries would contain and reduce the growing security threats and risks on its borders. More specifically, it was hoped that the existence of such an effective regional mechanism would provide a platform for regional conflict resolutions.[134]

In the words of Turkish premier Demirel 'we believe we have to create effective regional mechanisms to solve today's conflicts and to work on economic interdependence so that future conflicts can be avoided.'[135] Similarly, foreign minister Cetin also underlined Ankara's reliance on multilateral institutions, 'fostering regional economic integration through infrastructure projects requiring multilateral collaborations would foster peace and stability'.[136] Thus, the intention was, as one Turkish diplomat stated, 'to take the steps that would lead to economic stability and lasting peace in the region through stronger economies.'[137] Presumably, such mechanisms offered Turkey valuable

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[133]Ercan Ozer, 'The Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the EU' *Perceptions,* vol. 1, no. 3, (September-November 1996), pp. 72-86; Oral Sander, 'Turkey and the Organisation for Black Sea Economic Cooperation', *International Journal of Turkish Studies,* vol. 6, nos. 1-2, (Winter 1992-94), p. 66; 'Ankara Hosts Key Black Sea Region Development Meeting', *Dateline Turkey,* 22 December 1990; Faruk Sen, 'Black Sea Economic Cooperation: A Supplement to the EC?', *Aussen Politik,* vol. 44, no. 3, (1993), p. 281.

[134]Oral Sander, 'The Balkan and Black Sea Cooperation', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 17, no. 3, (1993), p. 37; Duygu B. Sezer, 'The Black Sea Politics and Turkey', *Turkey at the Threshold of the 21st Century: Global Encounters and/vs. Regional Alternatives*, (Ankara: International Relations Foundation, 1998).

[135]*World Statesman,* vol. 2, no. 1, (Winter 1993), p. 84.

[136]'Turkey Says Economic Ties Can End Black Sea Strife', *The Reuters,* 10 December 1992.

[137]Oktay Ozuye, 'Black Sea Economic Cooperation', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 3, no. 3, (Summer

opportunities to develop into an important political and economic player.[138] Thus, Ankara was strongly convinced that Turkey's place in this changing environment should be represented institutionally by establishing a new organisation under Turkish leadership known as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Project.[139]

The BSECP was signed by Turkey, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia and Ukraine at a summit meeting in Istanbul in June 1992, and the agreement was institutionalised subsequently.[140] It was hoped that the organisation would create political co-operation in the two hinterlands: the Balkans through Turkey, and Central Asia and the Caucasus through the Ukraine.[141] In the initial period, Turkey financed the whole initiative, hosted almost all the meetings, and undertook the secretariat work for nearly two years.[142] The participating countries declared that they had decided to develop mutual and bilateral economic co-operation and that priority would be given to projects in areas such as transportation and communication; the exchange of economic and commercial data; standardisation; energy; tourism; agriculture; the environment; and science and technology.[143] It also agreed to establish the 'BSEC Trade and Development Bank' which commenced into operations in 1999.[144] Later, the members proclaimed the 11-nation group as a regional economic organisation. In 1993, the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC was established with the

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1992), p. 49.

[138]Sule Kut, 'Karadeniz Ekonomik Isbirligi'nin Boyutlari', *Strateji,* no. 3, (1995), pp. 93-105.

[139]Muftuler-Bac, *op.cit.*, p. 44; Miltiadhes Evert, 'Turkey's Strategic Goals: Possibilities and Weakness', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 4, (Fall 1993), p. 32.

[140]For more detailed information on origins and objectives of the project see, 'Born Healthy: Black Sea Cooperation in Effect, *Newspot,* 2 July 1992; Tunc Aybak, 'Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC) and Turkey: Extending European Integration to the East?' in *Politics of Black Sea: Dynamics of Co-operation and Conflict,* Tunc Aybak (ed.), (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2001), pp. 31-7; Tansug Bleda, , 'Black Sea-Economic Cooperation Region', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 16, no. 1-2, (1991), pp. 60-1.

[141]Oral Sander, 'Turkey and the Turkic World', *Central Asian Survey,* vol. 13, no. 1, (1994), p. 42.

[142]Ayse Y. Kolat, 'Black Sea Economic Cooperation in Perspective', *Eurasian Studies,* vol. 3, no. 3, (Fall 1996), p. 24.

[143]Ozuye, *op.cit.*, pp. 52-3.

[144]*Anadolu Ajansi*, 21 June 1999.

goals of creating the legal basis for economic co-operation among member countries and promoting regional peace.[145] The Assembly established was unique, as it provided the only regional forum of the Black Sea countries where parliamentarians from participant nations could discuss a variety of issues.[146]

The project was considered an important achievement for Turkey and reflected its growing role as a regional power in the new environment. Sukru Elekdag, a senior Turkish diplomat who originally proposed the project, has argued that 'the agreement means that for the first time in the course of 50 years of the foundation of the Turkish Republic that ground has been laid for an international institution for a project pioneered by Turkey.'[147] The project was also branded a triumph for Turkish diplomacy in its successes in bringing together the leaders of a large number of mutually suspicious, if not entirely hostile, nations with various disputes and armed conflicts, though this became one of the main factors responsible for the project's failure to achieve anything significant.[148]

Although the organisation was founded on a firm basis and had a huge potential to grow, it did not make the progress expected of it in the period under examination.[149] There were several economic, political and legal reasons for this. The ratification of its charter in the national parliaments of the member countries was delayed until 1999, though highlighting the reluctance of member states to commit to the process. As such the organisation was not regarded as a true international organisation and was ineligible for funds from international bodies such as the World Bank.[150] Moreover, some of the members, Turkey and Greece, Azerbaijan and Armenia, Ukraine and Russia disagreed on

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[145]'BSCE New Dimensions', *Newspot,* 11 March 1993.
[146]'Black Sea States Form Parliamentary Assembly, *Reuters,* 26 February 1993.
[147]Sukru Elekdag, 'Karadeniz Ekonomik Isbirligi', *Milliyet,* 2 February 1992.
[148]Hale, 'Turkish Foreign Policy After the Cold War', *op.cit.*, p. 244.
[149]Sukru Elekdag, 'Karadeniz Ekonomik Isbirligi (KEI)', *Milliyet,* 25 November 1996.
[150]Uzgel, 'Balkanlar', *op.cit.*, p. 522.

numerous issues raised at the forum.[151] Economically, there were also sharp differences between the economies of the members and most of them (with the exception of Turkey and Greece) still had to complete the process of transition from centralised economies to the free market system. More importantly, financial resources to fund the main projects were lacking.[152]

As of 1997, the member countries enjoyed combined GNPs of US$1.1 trillion with a total trade of US$350 billion and they had a wide range of complementary industries and agricultural sectors.[153] Thus, the economic value of the BSEC from Turkey's point of view was more than simply the opening up of a formerly closed or semi-closed markets of more than 350 million people.[154] Despite this immense potential, Turkish trade did not generate the dramatic increases with the member states that were hoped. Within two years of the launch of the project, trade volume with the other members of the BSEC reached 9 percent of Turkey's overall trade (up from 7 per cent in 1992).[155] By 1999, this was 8 percent of its total exports, and almost 11 percent of its imports. However, it should be noted that Russia was responsible for almost half this figure, and in fact Turkey's export to Russia suffered a sharp decrease following the financial crisis in Russia in the late 1990s.[156] As such, the increase in trade may well have happened anyway regardless of the BSEC objectives.[157]

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[151]Sule Kut, 'The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s' in *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power*, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci (eds), (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 6.

[152]Ercan Ozer, 'Concept and Prospects of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 20, nos. 1-2, (1996), pp. 100-3; Richard E. Ericson, 'On Problems of Economic Transition in the Black Sea Region', *Bogazici Journal,* vol. 9, no. 1, (1995), pp. 23-31.

[153]For economies of the member states see, N. Bulent Gultekin and Ayse Mumcu, 'Black Sea Economic Cooperation' in *Turkey Between East and West,* Vojtech Mastny and R. Craig Nation (eds.), (Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 185-99.

[154]Ziya Onis, 'Turkey in the Post-Cold War era: In Search of Identity', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 48, no. no. 1, (Winter 1995), p. 58.

[155]'Romanya KEI'yi Istiyor', *Aksiyon,* 24-30 December 1994, p. 44.

[156]*Turkiye Temel Ekonomik Gostergeler Haziran 2001,* (T.C. Basbakanlik DPT)

[157]Hale, *op.cit.*, p. 269.

Initial expectations in Turkey about the prospect of creating an EFTA-type free trade area, which could embrace new members including Turkic states, also failed to develop.[158] In all, although the project was ambitious, it ultimately failed to meet the expectations and promises nothing more than a loose political organisation with little prospect of evolving into a genuine economic union.[159]

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[158]Muzaffer Dartan, 'Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC): A New Regional Integration Project', *Marmara Journal of European Studies,* vol. 3, nos. 1-2, (1993-1994), p. 148.

[159]Bulent Aras, *The New Geopolitics of Eurasia and Turkey's Poistion*, (London: Frank Cass, 2002) p. 100; Baskin Oran, *Turk Dis Politikasi,* Baskin Oran (ed.), vol. 2, (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2002), pp. 521-2.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TURCO-GREEK RELATIONS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA: NEIGHBOURS STILL IN CONFLICT

7.1. Developments in Turkish-Greek Relations: New rivalries and tensions

The end of the Cold War era and subsequent developments in the Balkan peninsula added to Greek-Turkish differences over the Aegean Sea and Cyprus.[1] Moreover, it could be argued that the post-Cold War era illuminated the differences between both countries[2] and, especially with developments in the Balkans, the relationship became more strained than previously.[3]

As such, Turkey's new role in the post-Cold War Balkan peninsula caused serious concerns in Greece, where it was feared that 'Ankara's grand strategy aims at boosting the world role of Turkic and Islamic nations stretching from Central Asia to central Yugoslavia.'[4] In particular, rhetoric relating to the 'Turkish world extending from [the] Adriatic to China' and 'the Turkish century' further increased Greek suspicion of Turkish intentions. With respect to the Balkans, Athens believed that Turkey was motivated to exploit an already volatile situation by expanding its influence among the various Muslim populations on Greece's northern frontier.[5] As early as 1992, while Yugoslavia was still in the process of disintegration, the Greek foreign minister expressed Athens's concern over Turkish pressures on Greece through the encirclement of his country by the Muslim

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[1]Consequently, as Korkmaz Haktanir, a former senior foreign ministry official and Turkish ambassador to London, explained, relations strained to the extent that the two neighbours did not have any significant dialogue for more than twenty years. *Milliyet*, 3 March 1999;

[2]Gulnur Aybet, *Turkey's Foreign Policy and its Implications for the West*, (London: RUSI, 1994), p. 37.;

[3]During the Cold War years, this tense relationship was certainly further invigorated during the reign of successive PASOK governments, Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement, under the leadership of Andreas Papandreou (who was known for his uncompromising stance against Turkey) between 1981 and 1989. See, 'Towards a multi-dimensional foreign policy', 1960-1980. More about PASOK's policy on Turkish-Greek relations see, Tozun Bahceli, *Greek-Turkish Relations since 1955,* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), p. 153; Van Coufoudakis, 'PASOK and Greek-Turkish Relations' in *Greece, 1981-89: The Populist Decade,* Richard Clogg (ed.), (London and Hampshire: Macmillan, 1993), pp. 167-78.

[4]N. A. Stavrou, 'The Dismantling of the Balkan Security: Consequences for Greece, Europe, and NATO', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 6, no. 1, (Winter 1995), p. 32.

[5]'Yunanistan'in Turkiye Korkusu', *Cumhuriyet*, 12 February 1992. Peter Thompson, 'Trouble in the Balkans', Europe Magazine, April 1991, p. 29; Gregorios Demestichas, 'Greek Security and Defence Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 2, (Spring 1997), p. 221.

and Turkish communities in the Balkans (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, as well as in Western Thrace in Greece).[6] This sense of suspicion was highlighted during the wars in Bosnia, and later Kosovo.[7] Indeed, as one Turkish academic argued, the pro-Serbian policies of Athens during the Yugoslav crisis were based to a large extent on Greece's perception of how the evolving situation might or might not work to Turkey's advantage.[8] Indeed, as one Greek diplomat noted, the US-led action in Yugoslavia was viewed in Athens as an effort to alter national borders in the Balkans and to destroy Serbia by providing greater land for Albania, thereby making Turkey a 'super power' in the region.[9]

In this context, Turkey's close relationship with those countries not to mention Bulgaria was viewed by Athens as a direct threat to its security.[10] As such, Turkish recognition of Macedonia in the face of Greek opposition, and the diplomatic, political and economic support given to Albania, which Greece perceived as tantamount to encirclement by two new, potentially hostile neighbours, all served to confirm Greek suspicions about Turkey's designs, as well as to aggravate existing tensions.[11] Turkish support for Albanian membership in the Organisation of Islamic States Conference in 1992 was perceived as an evidence of this.[12] The Greek prime minister accused Turkey of actively encouraging Albania against Greece.[13] Similarly the Greek defence minister

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[6]D. Volkan Vamik and Norman Itzkowitz, *Turks and Greeks: Neighbours in Conflict*, (Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, 1994), p. 165.

[7]For example, Greece opposed Turkey's proposal for a military action to halt the Serbian attacks on Bosnian Muslims and contrary to Turkish policy it closed its airspace to NATO planes striking against Yugoslavia during the Kosovo crisis 'Atina Bosna'ya Askeri Mudahelede Yer Almayacak', *Cumhuriyet*, 15 August 1992 and *Hurriyet*, 13 May 1999.

[8]Sezer, 'Turkey', *op.cit.*, pp. 84-5.

[9]*Aksam*, 25 November1999.

[10]Stephanos Constantinides, 'Turkey: The Emergence of a New Foreign Policy the Neo-Ottoman Imperial Model', *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, vol. 24, 1996, pp. 323-34; Eric Rouleau, 'The Challenges to Turkey', Foreign Affairs, vol. 72, no. 5, (November-December 1993), p. 114.

[11]'Taninma Karari Yunanistan'i Uzdu', *Cumhuriyet*, 7 February 1992. Karpat, *op. cit.* p. 5.

[12]Ilhan Uzgel, 'Balkanlarla Iliskiler' in *Turk Dis Politikasi,* Baskin Oran (ed.), vol. 2, (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2002), p. 515.

[13]Nazlan Ertan, 'Where Do We Go from Here?' *Turkish Probe*, 16 September 1994, p. 4.

argued that Turkey's initiatives in the region and its refusal to withdraw troops from Thrace and the Aegean region confirmed the fact that Turkey was still the country's main external threat.[14] Even the Turkish attempts to create multilateral schemes to strengthen cultural and economic ties were viewed by Athens as an attempt by Turkey to establish a Muslim axis in the Balkans. The agreements signed between Turkey, Macedonia, Albania and Bulgaria on the construction of a trans-Balkan highway project which would join the Adriatic Sea and the Black Sea, not to mention the establishment of a telecommunication systems also raised Greek suspicions.[15] In response to this, Greece initiated a motorway project that would connect Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Russia.[16] However, Turkey categorically denied these Greek claims, with Demirel explaining, 'Turkey's friendly relations with Bosnia, Macedonia and Bulgaria in the Balkans should not be perceived as a threat by Greece.'[17]

Having seen Turkey as the single 'source' of external threat for more than twenty-five years, military and diplomatic deterrence was indispensable to the Greek concept of survival.[18] This motivated Greece to attempt to marginalize Turkish influence in the post-communist Balkans as well as in the Caucasus, the Middle East and the Black Sea. This limited the Turkish role in the new geo-strategic environment. The ongoing Turkish-

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[14]The official defence doctrine adopted in 1984 considers Turkey as a permanent long-term source of danger to Greek interest and the primary strategic adversary in the Balkans. Andre Gerolymatos, 'The Military Balance of Power between Greece and Turkey: Tactical and Strategic Objectives' in *The Aegean Sea after the Cold War: Security and Law of the Sea Issues*, Andre Gerolymatos and John O. Iatrides (eds), (London and N. York: Macmillan Press, 2000), p. 54; 'Yunanistan'a Tehdit Turkiye'den Geliyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 2 July 1992; 'Tek Tehdit Turkiye', *Cumhuriyet*, 7 December 1992.

[15]Sule Kut, 'Yugoslavya Bunalimi ve Turkiye'nin Bosna-Hersek ve Makedonya Politikasi: 1990-1993' in *Turk Dis Politikasinin Analizi*, Faruk Soylemezoglu (ed.), Second edition, (Istanbul: Der, 1998), p. 337; 'Turkey Leads the Way for Trans-Balkan Highway, *Turkish Daily News*, 24 October 1995.

[16]Ilhan Uzgel, 'The Balkans: Turkey's Stabilising Role' in *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power*, Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci (eds), (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 64.

[17]'Demirel: Turkiye Balkan'larda Yunanistan'i Tehdit Etmiyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 2 February 1992.

[18]Kostas Ifantis, 'Perception and Rapprochement: Debating a Greek Strategy towards Turkey' in *Turkish-Greek Relations: The Security Dilemma in the Aegean*, Mustafa Aydin and Kostas Ifantis (eds.), (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 250.

Greek conflict was also one of the main political impediments to the Turkish application for membership in the EU. Athens also tried to counterbalance Turkey's potential threat by improving relations with the PKK as well as several countries that Ankara had tense relations with such as Syria and Armenia. It also tried to form an Orthodox Alliance to counter what it viewed as a Turkish-Muslim group along the northern borders of Greece.[19] Indeed, in 1986 Greek defence minister Gerassimos Arsenis said 'we have military cooperation with non-NATO countries that have problems with Turkey. This is our policy' and called for the establishment of an anti-Turkish front, a kind of regional co-operation system, that would include Armenia, Bulgaria, Russia, Iran, Iraq and Syria, as well as other regional states. As such, since 1990 Greece had landing rights in Syria for its warplanes in case of a conflict with Turkey or northern Cyprus. This was viewed by Ankara as a 'strategic partnership'.[20] Greece also finalised significant military agreements with Syria and Russia, in 1991 and 1995 respectively and held joint air manoeuvres with Russia in the Aegean in 1997.[21] Athens also signed a military cooperation agreement with Armenia in 1996 which was perceived as a Greek plot to 'surround' Turkey from the Caucasian front.[22] It was also claimed that following the Greek foreign ministry meetings with his Armenian and Iranian counterparts in 1998 and 1999, it was agreed on a regional defence alliance against Turkey and Israel.[23] These Greek efforts to improve its regional role and limit Turkish influence were viewed by Turkey as a plan to encircle it militarily.[24] Furthermore, Greece was also involved with the Russian-led oil pipeline

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[19]M. Fatih Tayfur, 'An Analysis of Turco-Greek Relations in the post-Cold War Era', *Turkish Area Studies*, no. 53, (November 2001), p. 19.

[20]*Cumhuriyet*, 2 April 1996; *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Western Europe (FBIS-WEU)*, 4 April 1996.

[21]Hasmet Akyuz, 'Degisen Dengelerin Odaginda Turkiye', *Silahli Kuvvetler Dergisi*, vol. 120, no. 367, (January 2001), pp. 67-8

[22]Sami Kohen, 'Guclu Hukumet Olmadikca', *Milliyet*, 19 June 1996.

[23]Daniel Pipes, 'The Real "New Middle East"', *Commentary*, 11 November, 1998, p. 25; Emil Danielyan, 'Officials Endorse Trilateral Economic Cooperation: Armenia, Iran, and Greece', *RFE/RL*, 9 September 1999.

[24]Malik Mufti, 'Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy', *Middle East Journal*, vol. 52, no. 1,

project that was competing with the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline to transport Caspian oil to the world markets. The proposed 'orthodox' or sea-land-sea project would bypass the Turkish straits and instead transport oil from Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiysk through the Bulgarian port of Bourgas to the Greek Aegean port of Alexandropolis.

Furthermore, the PKK issue seemed to offer a viable opportunity for Athens to force Turkey to compromise over disputed issues within the framework of bilateral relations. From a Greek perspective, as long as Turkey was preoccupied with the PKK issue, its foreign policy objectives particularly in the Balkans would be greatly hampered.[25] Indeed, as early as 1993, Kostas Badovas, a Greek parliamentarian who participated in the pro-Kurdish Democracy Party's (DEP) congress, a party considered to be a political wing of the PKK, declared in his speech their support for the Kurdish cause, 'We extend our wishes to the heroic Kurdish peoples for success. We understand your just cause and support it wholeheartedly.'[26] According to Turkish officials, senior Greek delegations met with Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK leader, and Greek military officers trained PKK members. It was also claimed that a group of officers led by a retired Greek general trained terrorists in regions extending from the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon to the Zap region in northern Iraq. The PKK also received missile training on the coast of the Adriatic Sea from a high-ranking Greek officer', according to the information received from the captured PKK members.[27] In fact, it was also revealed by one senior PKK member that Greece supplied the PKK with Serbian Strela missiles, which were used to bring down a Turkish helicopter.[28] Moreover, in 1997, 110 members of the Greek parliament sent letters to the Greek cabinet and to local administrations asking that the

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(Winter 1998), p. 40

[25]*Greece and PKK Terrorism*, (Ankara, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999); Spiros Ch. Kaminaris, 'Greece and the Middle East', *MERIA*, vol. 3, no. 2, (June 1999).

[26]Melek Firat, 'Yunanistan'la Iliskiler' in *Turk Dis Politikasi,* Baskin Oran (ed.), vol. 2, (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2002), p. 459.

[27]*Cumhuriyet*, 27 July 1997.

[28]Ugur Dundar, 'Bakin Su Yunanistan'in Yaptigina', *Hurriyet*, 7 March 1999.

PKK leader be officially invited to Athens.[29] Greece also allowed ERNK, the political wing of the PKK, to open an Athens office in 1998, the first official PKK office in Europe.[30] High level representatives of the ruling socialist PASOK Party, the New Democracy Party and the Left Coalition attended the opening ceremony.[31] However, Greece repeatedly denied allegations of failing to adhere to its obligations to fight terrorism and of extending logistical and political support to the PKK.[32] For example, Costas Simitis, the former Greek premier, assured Turkey, during his visit in 1998, that his country did not, and would not, support the PKK or any other terrorist organisations.[33]

Greek support for the PKK was most evident following Ocalan's departure from Syria in October 1998. When Ocalan's asylum request was refused by the Italian government (he was also refused by Russia and other European states) he was flown to Kenya with a false Greek Cypriot passport by Greek intelligence agents and sheltered in the Greek embassy until his capture in February 1999.[34] Later, during his trial, Ocalan would reveal that Greece had supplied weapons and training to the PKK since 1988 and that the organisation had training camps on Greek territory.[35] This further damaged the already tense bi-lateral relationship and motivated Turkish president Demirel to describe Greece as a rogue state, which should be condemned as a terrorist-supporting country. He even

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[29]*Milliyet*, 11 April 1997.

[30]M. Ali Yula, 'Yunanli General Apo ile Basbasa', *Nokta*, 12 April 1992; *Turkish Probe*, 16 September 1994, p. 3; Nicole and Hugh Pope, *Turkey Unveiled: From Ataturk and After*, (London: John Murray, 1997), pp. 76-7.

[31]*Zaman*, 1 May 1998.

[32]'Tension Riding High in the Aegean', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, March 1996, p. 121; Sukru Elekdag, '2½ War Strategy', *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (March-May 1996), pp. 34-5.

[33]*Hurriyet*, 14 October 1998.

[34]*Milliyet*, 16 February 1999; Ocalan's capture caused severe crisis in Athens and resulted with resignation of three senior ministers. *The Guardian*, 19 February 1999.

[35]'Greece Fed Weapons to Kurd Rebels', *The Independent*, 24 February 1999; *Hurriyet*, 23 February 1999; *Milliyet*, 26 and 27 February 1999.

threatened that 'if they [Greece] choose to continue with their unlawful behaviour we reserve the right to take precautions in self defence.'[36]

Additionally, Greece's increasing allocation of resources to defence was primarily influenced by growing Turkish military capabilities, particularly following the full implementation of the Turkish armament programmes.[37] According to the Greek defence minister, the Greek army had to curb its numerical inferiority with regards to the Turkish army by acquiring high-tech weaponry, increasing the mobility of its units and concentrating on troop training.[38] This is given credence by the fact that Greece's defence budget of US$5 billion annually, is the most per capita of any NATO members excluding the US[39] and Greece was engaged in a five year (1996-2000), US$14 billion upgrade.[40] It also strengthened its air defence system with the purchase of patriot missiles and other air defence systems worth US$18 billion.[41]

Finally, the tense Turco-Greek relationship also severely disrupted the Turkish-EU relationship as the Greek factor emerged as one of the main post-Cold War impediments to Turkish ties with the EU. As Greek defence minister Akis Cohacopulos said in 1996, Greece was determined to block all Turkish efforts in this respect.[42] In fact, ever since Greece became a member of the EU in 1981 its European veto became Greece's main instrument against Turkey.[43] As Ozdem Sanberk, a former senior foreign ministry official

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[36]*The Guardian*, 24 February 1999; *Briefing*, Issue. 1234, 15 March 1999, p. 20.

[37]Christos G. Kollias, 'The Effects of External Security Considerations on Defence Expenditures in the Context of Greek-Turkish Bilateral Relations', *Bogazici Journal*, vol. 9, no. 1, (1995), p. 145; Heinz-Jurgen Axt, 'Dogu-Bati Ihilafinin Sona Ermesiyle Balkanlarda Soyutlanan Yunanistan'in Dis Politika ve Guvenlik Politikasina Iliskin Durumu', *Dis Politika Dergisi*, vol. 6, no. 1, (April 1995), p. 145; Thanos Dokos, 'Greek Security Doctrine in the Post-Cold War Era', *A Journal of Foreign Policy Issues*, (Summer 1998).

[38]*Sabah*, 4 February 1997.

[39]*SIPRI Year Book 1997*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 195 and p. 201; *SIPRI Year Book 2001*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 281 and p. 287.

[40]Marcia Christoff Kurop, 'Greece and Turkey: Can They Mend Fences?', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 77, no. 1, (January-February 1998), p. 11.

[41]*Turkiye*, 14 January 1999.

[42]*Cumhuriyet*, 17 December 1996.

[43]Constantine Stephanou and Charalambos Tsardanides, 'The EC Factor in the Greece-Turkey-Cyprus

and Turkish ambassador to London, has explained 'the central fact for us is that since 1981, the EU has allowed one of its members to subordinate the Union's interests to a historical and political vendetta against a neighbour. This has paralysed our working relations and institutional links; isolated our country; and poisoned the atmosphere at every level.'[44]

Athens continuously blocked any new development in EU-Turkish relations hoping that it could garner political support and get more concessions from Turkey in its bilateral disputes by using its position inside the EU.[45] As such, Greece was the only member to vote against asking the Commission to prepare an opinion as to when Turkey formally applied for EU membership in 1987.[46] It was also widely perceived in Ankara that Greece (alongside Germany) played a major role in the exclusion of Turkey from the EU's biggest enlargement process to date during the Luxembourg Summit of 1997, and only dropped its veto on Turkey's EU candidacy during the Helsinki Summit of 1999.[47] Athens also blocked the fourth EC-Turkey financial protocol, which would have released ECU600 million, and Turkish access to the Development Aid Programme for Mediterranean Countries.[48] During the completion process of the Customs Union with the EU in 1995, Greece agreed to lift its veto threat on the condition that the EU would give a deadline for the start of accession negotiations with Greek Cyprus, and the deadlock was only broken when the EU promised to start negotiations six months after

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Triangle' in *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External Factors,* Dimitri Constas (ed.), (New York: St Martin's Press, 1991), p. 226. 'A Survey of Turkey: Getting Ready for Europe', *The Economist*, 18 June 1988, p. 4; David Bachard, *Turkey and the European Union,* (London: CER, 1998), p. 27.

[44]Ozdem Sanberk, *The Outlook for Relations between Turkey and the European Union after the Cardiff Summit*, speech delivered at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 20 July 1998.

[45]Ronald Meinardus, 'Third Party Involvement in Greek-Turkish Dispute' in *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External Factors*, Dimitri Constas (ed.), (London: Mcmillan, 1991), pp. 161-3.

[46]John Redmond, *The Next Mediterranean Enlargement of the European Community: Turkey, Cyprus, and Malta?*, (Hants: Dartmouth Publishing, 1993), p. 38.

[47]*Athens News Agency*, 13 December 1999.

[48]Suha Bolukbasi, 'The Turco-Greek Dispute: Issues, Policies, and Prospects' in *Turkish Foreign Policy*, C. H. Dodd (ed.), (Cambridge: The Eatlon Press, 1992), p. 47.

intergovernmental talks. Following this Greece also refused to release community aid to Turkey worth ECU375 million (US$472 million), which had been agreed under the Customs Union agreement.[49]

Given the security concerns of the Cold War, Brussels, to some extent, was able to maintain a balanced policy in its relations with Greece and Turkey. However with the end of the bipolar era this became increasingly difficult for the EU to continue.[50] In essence, from the early 1990s, Brussels began to link future relations with Turkey to the solution of the Cyprus issue and the improvement of Turco-Greek relations.[51] The implication was that the ongoing disputes between Turkey and Greece should be resolved prior to any negotiations between Turkey and the EU.[52] As Sanberk argued 'the familiar tests for eligibility for EU membership were being replaced by new questions such as the Turkish-Greek dispute, Cyprus, and the Kurds. Economic issues began to slip into the background.'[53] In response, Turkey argued that neither the Cyprus problem nor the Turkish-Greek dispute should affect Turkish-EU relations, and that once Turkey became a member of the Union, settlements of the disputes would be much easier.[54]

Taken together, the Turkish national security policy paper published in 1997 declared Greece, alongside Syria, as the main external threat to Turkey.[55] Thus, post-Cold War and regional developments that presented Turkey with significant opportunities to evolve into a regional power in the Caucasus, the Middle East and particularly the Balkans, was to

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[49]Canan Balkir, 'The Customs Union and Beyond' in *The Political Economy of Turkey in the Post-Soviet Era*, Libby Rittenberg (ed.), (Westport: Praeger, 1998), p. 70.

[50]Harun Arikan, *Turkey and the European Union: an Awkward Candidate for EU Membership*, (Harts: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 147-8; Ronald R. Krebs 'Perverse Institutionalism: NATO and the Greco-Turkish Conflict', *International Organisation*, vol. 53, no. 2, (Spring 1999), p. 366.

[51]Sukru Gurel, *Tarihsel Boyut Icinde Turk Yunan Iliskileri 1821-1993*, (Ankara: Umit, 1993), p. 102.

[52]Meltem Muftuler-Bac, 'The Never-Ending Story: Turkey and the European Union' in *Turkey Before and After Ataturk: Internal and External Affairs,* Sylvia Kedourie (ed.), (London: Frank Cass, 1999), p. 245.

[53]Sanberk, *op.cit.*

[54]Sukru S. Gurel, 'Turkey and Greece: A Difficult Aegean relationship in *Turkey and Europe*, C. Balkir and A. Williams (eds.), (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), p. 181.

[55]Lale Sariibrahimoglu, 'Arming For Peace' *Janes Defence Weekly*, 19 August 1998, p. 26.

some extent limited by the Greek factor as Turkey had to concentrate on containing and minimising the Greek challenge and as such could not focus on developing and implementing a foreign policy that would capitalise on the regional opportunities that existed. It took a devastating earthquake to hit Turkey in late 1999 and later a less severe one that took place in Greece to bring a significant rapprochement between the two neighbours. These natural catastrophes saw the exchange of rescue operations and humanitarian aid and the start of a new dialogue. This 'seismic diplomacy' led to bilateral talks and the development of what the Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem termed people-to-people relations.[56]

7.2. Cyprus: New crises not new solution

The end of the Cold War did not bring about a concrete solution to the Cyprus question.[57] Rather, the issue became particularly acute for Turkey's external relations in the face of a Cypriot arms-build up and in 1997 the EU membership application of Greek Cyprus.

Cyprus only fifty miles off Turkey's Mediterranean coast, makes it is a key strategic concern for Ankara as Turkish premier Ecevit claimed, 'as much as Turkey is the guarantee of the TRNC's security (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus), the TRNC is the guarantee of Turkey's security.'[58] There are also familial and historic ties with the 200,000 Turkish Cypriots living on the island, as such Cyprus has been an important element in Turkey's foreign and security policies in general and in the Turco-Greek relations in particular for almost half a century.[59]

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[56]Ismail Cem, *Turkey in the Twenty-first Century*, speech delivered at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 28 March 2001.

[57]See, Suha Bolukbasi, 'The Cyprus Dispute in the Post-Cold War Era', *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, vol. 18, no. 1, (Spring 1994), pp. 1-23, especially pp. 7-23.

[58]*Turkish Probe*, 25 July 1999.

[59]One Turkish observer noted 'had there been no Cyprus dispute, other Turco-Greek problems would have been more manageable, or their settlement more probable.' Bolukbasi, 'The Cyprus Dispute', *op. cit.*, p. 3; Also see, T. A. Cououmbis and P. Yannis, 'Greek Security Challenges in the 1990s' in *Balkans: A*

As neither party has agreed to compromise on issues on which they have strong interests, international efforts for a settlement, mostly through the UN, have failed.[60] This in turn led to what former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called, 'a deep crisis of confidence between the two sides.'[61] Even the US special negotiator, Richard Holbrooke, acclaimed as the architect of the Dayton peace agreement on Bosnia, admitted that he could make no headway in resolving the dispute, 'Cyprus is not like Bosnia, it is more difficult and will take a long time to tackle.'[62]

To make things more complicated, the Greek-Cypriot government applied for EC membership in 1990.[63] George Vassiliou, president of Cyprus at the time, announced, 'we are making this application on behalf of all Cypriots'.[64] Instantaneously, the Turkish side declared that the application did not represent the whole of Cyprus and argued that it was against the London and Zurich agreements that bar Cyprus from joining economic and political organisations in which both guarantors, Greece and Turkey are not members.[65] Rauf Denktas, the leader of Turkish Cypriots, stated that the accession of Greek Cyprus to

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Mirror of the New International Order, Gunay G. Ozdogan and Kemali Saybasili (eds.), (Istanbul: Eren, 1995), p. 209. For a detailed discussion on the implications of the Cyprus dispute on Turkish-Greek relations see, Andreas D. Mavroyiannis, 'Kibris Sorununun Turk-Yunan Iliskilerine Etkileri' in *Turk-Yunan Uyusmazligi,* Semih Vaner (ed.), (Istanbul: Metis, 1988).

[60]For the UN initiatives since the crisis began see, Suha Bolukbasi, 'The Cyprus Dispute and the United Nations: Peaceful non-Settlement Between 1954-1996', *International Journal Middle East Studies,* vol. 30, no. 3, (1998), pp. 411-34.

[61]*Report of the Secretary-General,* The UN Security Council, S/24830, 19 November 1992.

[62]*The Daily Telegraph,* 26 September 1997.

[63]Although the EU initially deferred the application until 1995, with the Greek persistence, Brussels opened membership negotiations in 1998. *Opinion on the Application Made by Cyprus to Join the European Union'* European Commission, Com (93), Brussels, 30 June 1993; *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 6, 1994; *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 6, 1995; *The Independent*, 15 December 1997.

[64]Monteagle Stearns, *Entangled Allies: US Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus,* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), p. 123. Bolukbasi, 'The Cyprus', *op.cit.*, p. 425; Margarita Mathiopoulos, 'Toward an Aegean Treaty: 2+4 for Turkey and Greece', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 8, no. 3, (Summer 1997), p. 128.

[65]'Bozer: Rum'larin AT Basvurusunu Kinadi' *Cumhuriyet,* 2 August 1990; 'Denktas: Basvuru Kanunsuzdur', *Cumhuriyet,* 17 July 1990; 'Greek Cypriot EC Application a Setback, Say Ozal and Denktas', *Dateline Turkey,* 15 September 1990. For the legal arguments see, Michael Stephen, *The Cyprus Questi*on, (London: The British-Northern Cyprus Parliamentary Group, 1997), pp. 79-84; Rauf Denktas, 'Urgent Need to Rethink Cyprus', *Perceptions,* vol. 1, no. 4, (March-May 1996), p. 17; S. R. Sonyel, 'Three into One Won't Go', *Impact International,* (June 1998), p. 27.

the EC would effectively solve the Cyprus problem 'on the basis of two separate republics' and described such a move as *enosis*, the Greek term for union between Greece and Cyprus, through the EC.[66]

Turkey opposed the unilateral Greek Cypriot application on legal, political and security grounds. Ankara argued that the Greek side had no lawful authority under the 1960 Treaties on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot people or the whole of Cyprus; thus, the EU should not have processed it as if it were a valid application. Consequently, 'the Greek Cypriot application could not be taken up before a settlement on the island.'[67] According to Turkish president Demirel, 'if Turkey turned a blind eye to attempts to violate these provisions, its status as a guarantor-state on the island would be ruined.'[68] Turkey was further concerned by the fact that a possible Greek Cypriot accession, ignoring the existence of the Turkish side completely, would see the encirclement of Turkey from the south, as well as adding another Greek vote to the already existing one within the EU, which would likely result in the further alienation of Turkey from Europe. This may be viewed, as one Turkish scholar claimed, as a development that enabled the Greek government to 'Europeanise' the Cyprus problem by using its veto power in other policy areas requiring unanimous decisions.[69] This could in turn, it was argued, result in the EU becoming heavily embroiled in Turco-Greek disputes and lead to the extension of support for the Greek side in the wider Turkish-Greek dispute.[70] In fact, although economic imperatives were a major factor in the Cypriot application, political and

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[66]*New Cyprus*, vol. 7, no. 1, (January 1991), p. 11.

[67]See, Turkish foreign minister Erdal Inonu's statement, *Turkish Daily News*, 21 September 1995.

[68]*Newspot*, 1997.

[69]Mehmet Ugur, *The European Union and Turkey: An Anchor/Credibility Dilemma*, (Hants: Ashgate Publishing, 1999), p. 162.

[70]John Redmond, 'Security Implications of the Accession of Cyprus to the European Union', *The International Spectator*, vol. 30, no. 3, (July-September 1995), p. 45; Heinz Kramer and Friedemann Muller, 'Relations with Turkey and the Caspian Basin Countries' in *Allied Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, Robert D. Blackwill and Michael Sturmer (eds.), (Cambridge: CSIA Studies in International Security, 1997), pp. 188-9.

security issues also played a significant role.[71] Some of these factors were acknowledged by Glafcos Clerides who explained that, the Greek Cypriot president, 'admitting Cyprus into the EU, will abrogate Turkey's right stemming from the Guarantor Treaty to unilaterally intervene.'[72]

In response to the Greek Cypriot application for full membership of the EC Turkey decided to strengthened political and economic ties with Turkish Cyprus.[73] Furthermore, the EU's decision to open negotiations with Cyprus resulted in the Turkish Cypriot leadership declaring that they would withdraw from the inter communal talks while Ankara warned that Turkey would proceed with the 'partial integration' of North Cyprus if the membership talks went ahead.[74] This did not occur but an agreement for the establishment of an Association Council between Turkey and the TRNC was signed, as the first concrete step towards partial economic integration between Turkey and Northern Cyprus.[75] Turkish and Northern Cypriot officials also agreed on the formation of a 'joint economic zone' between the two, which aimed to abolish eventually customs restrictions lead to a 'customs union'.[76]

In the end, with the accession of Cyprus as a full member, the issue effectively became a 'European issue' and, thus, as Greek foreign minister Papandreou claimed, Turkey was faced with a dilemma, namely that Ankara would either accept a solution to the Cyprus

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[71]James Redmond and Roderic Pace, 'European Security in the 1990s and Beyond: The Implications of the Accession of Cyprus and Malta to the European Union', *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 17, no. 3, (December 1996), p. 432.

[72]'Unfinished Symphony...Cyprus', *Newspot*, June 1997.

[73]'Turkey and KKTC Plan Customs Union', *Dateline Turkey*, 28 July 1990; J. D. Norton, Talk to Turkish Students on *'Cyprus and the European Union*, London, 18 March 1998.

[74]*Hurriyet*, 13 December 1997; *Turkiye*, 26 October 1997; 'Europe and Turkey: Still at Loggerheads', *Strategic Survey 1998-99*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for IISS, 1999), p. 111.

[75]*Cumhuriyet*, 7 August 1997.

[76]*The Daily Telegraph*, 1 April 1998.

problem which would probably be of a type that would be in conflict with Turkey's policy on the matter so far or be left outside the EU.[77]

In addition to the unilateral membership application of Greek Cyprus to the EU, the Cyprus question was further exacerbated by the fact that the Greek side became more and more ambitious in its arms build up in recent years. This put Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots in a delicate position.[78] Between 1990 and 1992 it was reported that the Nicosia government spent US$750 million on arms.[79] The official defence budget was US$365 million in 1996, which represented 4.1 percent of GDP.[80] The Centre for Cyprus Strategic Studies (CSS), an independent think tank, put this figure at 5.5 percent for 1998.[81] According to Nicosia, the reason for the ongoing arms build up is the existence of the Turkish army on the island.[82]

Furthermore, the decision of the Greek Cypriots to conclude a US$660 million air-defence deal with Russia to buy a number of 'S-300' ground-to-air missiles to strength their anti-aircraft system further increased tensions.[83] If the missiles had been deployed, they would have been within striking distance of southern Turkey. This could have dramatically shifted the military balance and greatly reduced Turkey's air superiority over the divided island. Turkey strongly opposed the deployment of the missiles and warned of its intent to stage a second intervention if any attempt was made to deploy the missiles.[84]

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[77] *Helsinki European Council*, Helsinki, 10-11 December 1999; *Milliyet*, 21 December 1999.

[78] James Nathan, 'Turkey on Edge', *International Relations*, vol. 13, no. 5, (August 1997), p. 17.

[79] 'Greek Cypriot Arms Build Up Reported', *Dateline Turkey*, 11 August 1990; 'Rumlar Silahlaniyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 12 February 1992.

[80] *Cyprus and Malta: Country profile 1997-1998*, The Economist Intelligence Unit.

[81] This has meant that the country is spending US$2 million a day, or US$500 per head on defence, which is just over half that of Israel. *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 January 1997 and *The Sunday Times*, 12 January 1997; *Briefing*, Issue 1232, 1 March 1999, p. 26.

[82] 'Kibris'ta Zor Donemec', *Cumhuriyet*, 20 October 1992.

[83] 'Cyprus Greeks in Missile Deal with Russians' *The New York Times*, 6 January 1997.

[84] *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 January 1997.

Ultimately, Turkey managed to prevent deployment and they were transferred to the Greek island of Crete as part of a US-brokered deal.[85]

A realistic solution the Cyprus crisis, acceptable to all parties concerned, would inevitably be of a great help to Turkey in coping with the difficulties it faces in its external relations, in particular, with Greece and the EU, one of the main impediments to improved Turco-Greek bilateral relations and ties with Brussels.[86] Until the matter is resolved, Turkey will continue to have to bear the economic, political and military burden of northern Cyprus.[87]

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[85]'Cyprus Decides Non-deployment of S-300 Missiles, Greece Agrees', *Athens News Agency*, 30 December 1998; 'Ankara's Hands Tied on S-300 Deployment on Crete', *Briefing*, no: 1231, 22 February 1999, p. 27.

[86]Greek premier Mitsotakis declared 'for the improvement of relations there is a fundamental precondition: the resolution of the Cyprus. Constantine Mitsotakis, 'The US, Greece, and Turkey: Problems and Opportunities in the New International System', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 4, (Fall 1993), p. 7.

[87]When financial subsidies, credits, the supply of 35,000 Turkish military personnel, and ship deployments were calculated and added up at the time, it became evident that Cyprus will continue to be almost as much of a drain on the Turkish budget as the exertion in war against the PKK. After 1974, the Turkish contribution to the Turkish Cypriot budget was estimated at 80 percent, but by 1990 that subsidy was reported to be in the 30 to 40 percent range. According to another report, between 1974 and 1993, this figure was no less than 20 percent. Indeed, Turkey supplied 90 percent of all external financial aid to northern Cyprus, which is thought be no less than US$3billion in 30 years. Nathan, *op.cit.*, p. 17; *Hurriyet*, 19 December 1996; http://countrystudies.us/cyprus/75.htm; *Economic Intelligence Unit (1994-95)*, p. 35; Metin Münir, 'Kibris'ta Çözümsüzlügün Ekonomik Altyapisi', *www.ntv.com.tr*, 23 Kasim 2001.

PART FIVE

DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOVIET UNION: NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN CAUCASIA AND CENTRAL ASIA FOR TURKEY

The break-up of the Soviet Union and then the emergence of the new independent states in Cuacasia and Central Asia significantly impacted Turkey's geo-strategic environment. Thus, for example, Turkey is no longer under the constant ideological and expansionist threat of communism and the border lands with its old formidable northern neighbour were replaced by the weak, newly-independent south Caucasian republics. In particular, the emergence of the Central Asian Turkic republics presented not only vast political and economic opportunities but also created huge enthusiasm among many circles that a gigantic 'Turkic world' has emerged extending from the Adriatic Sea to Chinese borders, raising expectations that as a 'pivotal state' it could play a leadership role in these geographies and thus had a real chance to be a significant regional (super) power in the twenty-first century.

However, certain developments in the post-Soviet era served to show that Turkey had to deal with serious challenges. Indeed, the power vacuum emerged with the decline of the Soviet rule led to numerous instabilities and conflicts particularly in Caucasia, such as the ethnic unrest in Georgia, the Azeri-Armenian and Chechen wars. As such, Turkey was increasingly preoccupied with how to fend off these new security issues rather than focus on formulating policies to seize the new opportunities. Moreover, the developments in Russian domestic politics necessitated that Russia should retain its supremacy in the 'near abroad' and Moscow quickly re-established its political and military influence in the old Soviet territories while becoming increasingly hostile to 'outsiders', notably Turkey. Hence, despite their pragmatic relations in economic field, Turkey and Russia had serious differences on numerous issues. When this coupled with its own political and economic shortcomings, Turkey's efforts to be a main actor in regional politics were seriously hampered.

CHAPTER EIGHT

TURCO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA: AN END TO ADVERSARY?

8.1. Difficult (but pragmatic) relations with Russia

The disintegration of the Soviet Union marked the end of two centuries, during which Turkey's geopolitical environment had been determined by the threat of Russian/Soviet expansionism, in particular on Turkey's northern and most vulnerable border.[1] However, Russia's ongoing desire to be the sole power in the former Soviet territories exacerbated tension between Moscow and Ankara over Turkey's growing relations with its 'near abroad', *Blizhnee zarubezhe*, an expression made up by Russians to distinguish between independent former imperial domains with Russian minorities and the rest of the world.[2] As such, the two countries developed diverse views and serious differences on issues ranging from the Azeri-Armenian conflict, the Bosnian and the Kosovo wars, rivalry in Central Asian and the Caucasia regions. There were also differences over Moscow's initiatives to undermine the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty in the 'near abroad', while the transportation of Caspian oil was also a matter of tension.[3] Relations were also disturbed, to some extent, by the issues of the Chechen war as well as Kurdish and the Russian arms sale to countries that Turkey had difficult relationships with. In addition, Russia remained a military superpower in both conventional and nuclear terms. All these factors severely limited Turkey's geo-

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[1]Bulent Gokay and Richard Langhorne, *Turkey and the New States of the Caucasus and Central Asia'*, (Norwich and London: Wilton Park Paper, 1996), pp. 1-2. Russian foreign policy analyst Markushin described this difficult neighborhood 'the two countries fought more than traded, but the eternal rivals have always remained eternal neighbours.' Vadim Markushin, 'Russia-Turkey: Doomed to be Eternal Neighbours', *Perceptions*, vol. 2, no. 1, (March-May 1997), p. 93.

[2]Alvin Z. Zubinstein, 'The Asian Interior: The Geopolitical Pull on Russia' in *Regional Power Rivalries in the New Eurasia: Russia, Turkey and, Iran*, Alvin Z. Rubinstein and Oles M. Smolansky (eds.), (New York and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), p. 257.

[3]Oya A. Mughisuddin, 'Rusya Federasyonu'nun Perestroika Sonrasi: Gercekleri, Ustlendigi Tarihi Misyonu ve Yeni Olusumlar', Dis Politika, vol. 5, no. 3, (April 1993), pp. 1-24; Kamuran Gurun, *Turk-Sovyet Iliskileri*, (Ankara: TTK, 1991), pp. 1-7.

strategic ambition in the region. Powers aspiring to play a 'great power' role should be able pursue its national interests despite another power. Having lacked the necessary capability, Turkey was not in a situation to challenge Russia in regional issues that closely concerned it and increasingly found it difficult to exert influence beyond its immediate locality.

Moreover, developments in domestic Russian politics also challenged Turkey's position in the ex-Soviet territories (particularly in Caucasia and Central Asia). The failure of the transition towards democratisation and a free market economy deepened the socio-economic crisis and intensified political instability, while a growing number of Russia's dissatisfied population began to support anti-reform policies and militant nationalist ideas.[4] The parliamentary elections of late 1993 resulted in important gains for 'Eurasians' as well as ultra nationalists at the expense of the reformers or 'Atlanticists' who urged the government to re-incorporate many of the ex-Soviet territories into a greater Russia in a policy of 'neo-imperialism'.[5] Soon, they became successful in pushing the government to return to Eurasia with more assertive and tougher foreign policies and making Russia the natural guarantor of its near abroad —most notably Azerbaijan and the Central Asian Turkic republics.[6]

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[4]For the reforms see, Dimitri Simes, 'Reform Reaffirmed', *Foreign Policy,* no. 90, (Spring 1993), pp. 38-56; Alexander Kozhemiakin, 'Democratisation and Foreign Policy Change: The Case of the Russian Federation', *International Studies,* vol. 23, no. 1, (January 1997), pp. 64-6. See also, Duygu B. Sezer, 'Turkey's New Security Environment, Nuclear Weapons and Proliferation', *Comparative Strategy,* vol. 14, no. 2, (April-June 1995), p. 150.

[5]The basic division between the 'Atlanticist' and the 'Eurasians' is the former wanted Russia to join the Western community as soon as possible while the latter instead looked to creating a role for Russia as a bridge between Europe and Asia. Mark Galeotti, *The Age of Anxiety: Security and Politics in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia,* (Essex: Longman, 1995), p. 106; James H. Brusstar, 'Russian Vital Interests and Western Security', *Orbis,* vol. 38, no. 4, (Fall 1994), pp. 609-11.

[6]For the new Russian foreign and security policy outlined under the 'Concept of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation' and 'Basic Provisions of the Military Doctrine', which was designed to co-ordinate policies and set forth the priorities of the basic foreign policy objectives and interests of Russia towards the 'near abroad' see, 'Foreign Policy of Russia in 1996 and 1997', *International Affairs,* (Moscow) vol. 43, no. 2, (1997), p. 62; Maxim Shashenkov, 'Russia in Central Asia: Emerging Security Links' in *From the Gulf to Central Asia: Players in the New Great Game,* Anoushiravan Ehteshami (ed.), (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1994), pp. 17-34; Duygu B. Sezer, 'Russia and South: Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus', *European*

Eventually, Russia became more suspicious of outsiders trying to fill the power vacuum in the near abroad. In opposition to Western-oriented Moscow leaders, who viewed Ankara as a stabilising force in the former Soviet south, geo-politically minded Russians inevitably saw Turkey as a rival.[7] The ultra nationalist Liberal Democratic Party secured more than one-fifth of the votes in the Russian legislative elections in December 1993 under the leadership of Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who presented Turkey as a contemporary rival and historic enemy.[8] As a matter of fact, as the Yeltsin administration sought to capture nationalist ground from the opposition, particularly after the 1993 elections, Russian foreign policy became more assertive in tone and deliberately exaggerated the fears of the revival of pan-Turkism.[9]

The new Russian foreign policy was soon put into practice and in due course, as will be seen later, Moscow managed to re-impose its dominance particularly in Transcaucasia and Central Asia.[10] By 1994, although Turkey no longer shared land borders with Russia, Moscow had managed to deploy Russian troops along the Turkish-Armenian and Turkish-Georgian borders as well as to secure a number of long-term military bases. It received the same privilege in Tajikistan and Kyrgyztan, and had proposed similar arrangements with Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine while Turkmenistan had 'contracted' with Russia for the participation of Russian officers into Turkmen patrols.[11] Russia was also behind the agreement for economic and cultural integration signed between itself, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan

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Security, vol. 5, no. 2, (Summer 1996), pp. 304-6; Alexander Rahr, 'New Focus on Old Priorities', *Transition*, (15 February 1995), pp. 9-11

[7]Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev, a leading pro-Western, once said 'we do not see the West as an enemy as in the past...we consider Turkey and the West as potential allies.' *SWB, ME/1297*, 6 February 1992; Dimitri Trenin, 'Russia and Turkey: A Cure for Schizophrenia', *Perceptions*, vol. 2, no. 2, (June-August 1997), p. 60; Oya A. Mugisuddin, 'Rusya Federasyonu'nun Dis Politika Hedefleri ve Bunlar Ustundeki Etken Faktorler', *Avrasya Dosyasi*, vol. 1, no. 1, (Spring 1994), p. 20.

[8]'The Zhirinovsky Factor: Realists not too Attractive Head', *Turkish Probe*, 23 December 1993, p. 4.

[9]Neil Malcolm and Alex Pravda, 'Democratisation and Russian Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 3, (July 1996); Gareth M. Winrow, *Turkey in Post-Soviet Central Asia*, (London: RIIA, 1995), p. 43.

[10]John Lloyd, *Rebirth of a Nation: An Anatomy of Russia*, (London: Michael Joseph, 1998), pp. 341-51.

[11]Martha Brill Olcott, 'Sovereignty and the 'Near Abroad'", *Orbis*, vol. 39, no. 3, (Summer 1995), pp. 358-9.

and Kazakhstan, which raised suspicions in Turkey that it would constitute a step toward reviving the former Soviet Empire. As President Demirel noted 'it is not the official policy of Russia to revive the Soviet Empire, but there are moves and tendencies in Russia which suggest otherwise.'[12]

Indeed, before long, Moscow openly expressed its revived strategic interests in the Balkans, the east Mediterranean and the Middle East. For example, Russia sided with Serbia during the Bosnian and Kosovo crises and friendship blossomed with Greek and Greek Cypriots, raising the suspicions in Ankara about an evolving anti-Turkish entente. This was, as noted already, evidenced by the sale of S-300 ground-to-air missiles to the Greek Cypriots in the mid-1990s.[13] Russia and Greece coordinated their positions during the Bosnian war and had similar policies over the Kosovo crisis.[14] Russia also expressed its uneasiness over Turkish incursions into northern Iraq on the grounds that Turkey was directly intervening in the clashes between the Kurdish groups that would increase tension on the region.[15]

Moreover, several other aspects of Russia's conduct caused concern in Ankara. Moscow sought to sell arms to countries who had poor relations with Turkey. For example, Russia sold US$1 billion worth of weapons to Iran in 1994, and it was feared that Moscow had approached Iran to sell it nuclear reactors.[16] The easy access to Russian-made weapons posed a serious threat to Turkey in view of its proximity to the troubled regions and its war against

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[12]*Cumhuriyet*, 9 May 1996.

[13]See, 'Cyprus: New crisis not new solutions', *Chapter Seven*; A. Suat Bilge, 'An Analysis of Turkish-Russian Relations', *Perceptions*, vol. 2, no. 2, (June-August 1997), p. 83; Veysel Yayan, 'Rusya Federasyonu ve Eski Dogu Bloku Ulkelerinde Savunma Sanayii', *Akademik Arastirmalar Dergisi*, vol. 1, no. 1, (May 1999), pp. 145-164; Richard K. Herrmann, 'Russian Policy in the Middle East: Strategic Change and Tactical Contradictions', *Middle East Journal*, vol. 48, no. 3, (Summer 1994), pp. 455.

[14]Duygu Bazoglu Sezer, 'Turkish-Russian Relations: From Adversity to "Virtual Rapprochment"' in '*Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 93.

[15]*Milliyet*, 12 November 1997.

[16]'Iran'dan Nukleer Tehlike', *Cumhuriyet*, 6 January 1992.

PKK terrorism.[17] Indeed, it was widely acknowledged that Russia sold arms to the PKK through Armenia and Iran.[18]

In spite of this unfavourable political environment, Turkey maintained pragmatic relations with Russia particularly in the economic field, from the late 1980s.[19] From the Turkish perspective, the development of economic interdependency with Russia appeared to be the only viable way, to minimize the very real differences that existed. Hence the Turkish-Russian relationship in the new era was based on mutual economic interests. Turkish president Turgut Ozal visited Moscow in early 1991, the first such high level visit since 1969, and several economic agreements particularly in economic field were concluded.[20] The BSECP of 1992 further contributed to the strengthening of economic relations, and the contribution of the dynamic Turkish private sector was also remarkable in this process during this period. Indeed, Turkish investments brought tens of thousands of Turkish workers to Russia, and every year around one million Russian visitors add significant revenues to Turkey's tourism industry.[21]

Additionally, Turkish Eximbank extended close to US$1.5 billion worth of credits to Moscow and close economic relations soon resulted in a sharp increase in the trade between

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[17]Rajan Menon and Henri J. Barkey, 'The Transformation of Central Asia: Implications for Regional and International Security', *Survival*, vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 83-4; Nancy Lubin, 'Central Asia: Issues and Challenges for United States Policy' in *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia and Its Borderlands*, Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (eds.), (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 265.

[18]*Hurriyet*, 9 June 1997.

[19]'SSCB ile Ekonomik Flort', *Cumhuriyet*, 6 August 1990; 'IBS Study Analysis Turkey's Route to Soviet Market', *Dateline Turkey*, 13 October 1990; Alexi Kuprianov, 'Sovyetler Birligi'nin Dis Ekonomik Iliskileri ve Turkiye ile Isbirligi Imkanlari' in *SSCB ve Dogu Avrupa Ulkelerinde Ekonomik Reformlar veTurkiye ile Isbirligi Imkanlari*, (Istanbul: ISO, 1990), pp. 123-30.

[20]Turkey also signed the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Co-operation with Russia during Turkish prime minister Demirel's visit to Moscow in 1992 'Spectacular Progress in Turco-Soviet Cooperation', *Newspot*, 14 March 1991; 'Rusya ile Yeni Donem', *Cumhuriyet*, 5 February 1992; Turkkaya Ataov, 'Turkey, the CIS and Eastern Europe' in *Turkey and Europe* Canan Balkir and A. Williams (eds.), (London: Pinter, 1993), pp. 196-8..

[21]Turan Aydin, 'Turkey's Rising Economic Capacity', *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 3, (September-November 1996), p. 145; Mensur Akgun, 'Turk-Rus Iliskileri,' *Yeni Yuzyil*, 22 October 1996; http//:www.kultur.gov.tr.

the two countries: from US$1.9 billion in 1990, to over US$3.3 billion in 1995 and US$4.2 billion in 1997.[22] In short, trade with Russia more than doubled between 1990 and 1997 (excluding black-market 'suit case' trade worth between US$6 to US$10 billion a year), making Russia Turkey's second largest trading partner. Turkish goods, of better quality than Russian ones, but cheaper than European counterparts, filled a gap in the lucrative market.[23]

However, during the 1998 and 1999 Russian financial crises, this trade fell to US$3.5 billion in 1998 and US$3 billion in 1999. Turkish exports to Russia also experienced a sharp decline in 1998 (US$1.3 billion) with a 34 per cent drop from the previous year, and less than US$600 million in 1999 while imports increased drastically mostly owing to Russian gas purchases. These figures for both exports and imports were more than US$2 billion in 1997.[24] A similar gloomy trend from the Turkish perspective was evident in the Turkish construction activity. By 1998, the total value of construction undertakings by Turkish developers had reached US$10 billion since 1987. In the year 2000, it fell to US$100-150 million.[25]

Furthermore, Turkey became heavily dependent on Russian natural gas, importing 6 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year from Russia.[26] In 1997, Turkey signed a further agreement worth US$13 billion, known as 'Blue Stream', which would enable it to import 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually for 25 years.[27] Turkey imports nearly 60 percent of its natural gas consumption from Russia which makes the country Russia's second biggest

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[22]*Dis Ticaret Istatistikleri*, (Ankara: TC Basbakanlik DIE, 1998), p. 515; *Briefing*, no. 1110, 30 September 1996, p. 20.

[23]'Turkey: Elusive Golden Apple', *The Economist*, 8 June 1996, p. 12.

[24]*Turkiye Temel Ekonomik Gostergeler Haziran 2001*, (T.C. Basbakanlik DPT)

[25]Duygu B. Sezer, 'Turkish-Russian Relations a Decade Later: From Adversity to Managed Competition' *Perceptions*, vol. 6, no. 1 (March - May 2001).

[26]*Yeni Yuzyil*, 15 January 1996; 'Turco-Russian Relations', *Newspot*, 1996.

[27]*Basbakan Mesut Yilmaz'in Konusmalari*, (Ankara: TC Basbakanlik, 1997), p. 209; 'Turkey Signs a Gas Deal', *The New York Times*, 29 April 1997.

natural gas customer after Germany. Ultimately, even though Turkey was not one of Russia's top ten trade partners (as of 2000, Turkey ranked fourteenth in terms of imports and twelfth in terms of exports), these extensive economic relations served to ease some of the difficult bilateral differences, which would have otherwise been more potentially explosive.

On the other hand, although the extent of economic ties served to create an economic interdependence between the two countries, it was still not sufficient to establish a common ground for a total rapprochement or to remove the mutual suspicions regarding each other's activities particularly in Central Asia, the Caucasus and elsewhere. In fact, mutual differences over the Chechen war, the oil issue and the evolving Russian military presence in Caucasia continued to impact adversely bilateral relations.

8.2. The Chechen War: The Turkish dilemma

Although the developments taking place in the North Caucasus in general, and Chechnya in particular, did not pose direct security risks to Turkey, given the existence of special ties with the various ethnic groups and nationalities of the region and the millions of Turkish citizens of north Caucasian descent, the situation there attracted a great deal of public attention in Turkey.[28] Similarly, Chechens turned to Turkey as the main source of support for recognition and support in their struggle against Russia. The Chechen unilateral declaration of independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991, though never recognised either by Moscow or the international community, created a certain excitement among the estimated

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[28]For the origins and dynamics of the regional developments which saw the whole Caucasus developed into one of the most tense regions in the post Soviet era see, Bill Bradley, 'Eurasia Letter: A Misguided Russian Policy', *Foreign Policy*, no. 101, (Winter 1995-1996); Robert Bruce Ware, 'Conflict in the Caucasus: An Historical Context and a Prospect for Peace', *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 17, no. 2, (1998), pp. 343-4; Anna Matveeva, 'Caucasus in Flames', *The World Today*, vol. 55, no. 10, (October 1999), p. 9; Ware, *op.cit.*, p. 346; Bulent Gokay, 'Post-Soviet Order: War in Chechnya' in *Milletlerarasi Munasebetler Turk Yilligi*, (Ankara: AUSBF, 1994), p. 25; Svante E. Cornell, 'Conflicts in the North Caucasus', *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 17, no. 3, (1998), pp. 409-41.

70,000-80,000 Turks of Chechen origin.[29] Equally, the two Chechen wars (in 1994 and 1999) against Russian forces received significant moral and material support from the Turkish citizens of Chechen origin as well as sympathy among the wider Turkish public.[30]

So did the wars' massive casualties and refugees particularly among the seven million Turkish citizens of North Caucasian origin.[31] Thus, the Chechen issue affected Turkish internal and external policies in two ways. First, Russian allegations of Turkish support for the Chechens inevitably strained Turkish-Russian relations. This perception in turn motivated Moscow to play the Kurdish card to weaken Turkey. Secondly, Turkey's official stance not to get involved in a crisis it presented as a purely internal matter for Russia, ultimately caused some uneasiness in the wider public and this (as in the Bosnian case) was exploited by religious and ultra-nationalist groups who successfully manipulated these sentiments.

From the start of the Chechen wars, Turkey considered the issue a Russian domestic matter and accordingly supported a peaceful solution to the conflict within the framework of the federal structure that preserved the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation.[32] As such, Turkey refrained from involvement in the conflict and therefore ignored Chechnya's

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[29]Niyazi Guney, 'Kuzey Kafkasya ve Cecenistan', *Yeni Turkiye*, vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), pp. 319-25; Mustafa Aydin, 'Turkey and Central Asia', *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 15, no. 2, (June 1996), p. 169.

[30]For Russia's Chechnya policy see, Graeme Herd, *Russia in Crisis: The Disintegration of the Federation?*, (London: Brassey's for the Centre for Defence Studies, 1998), p. 31; Interview with Nadir Devlet, deputy head of Turcology Institute of Marmara University, Istanbul, *Aksiyon*, 31 December 1994, pp. 48-51.

[31]The first Chechen war resulted in 80,000 casualties while roughly a third of Chechnya's pre-war population, more than 450,000 people, became refugees. Ware, *op.cit.*, p. 346; Carlotte Gall and Thomas de Wool, *Chechnya: A Small Victorious War*, (London: Pan Books, 1997), p. 360; Charles Blandey, *Cehchen Connections: From Khasavyurt to Moscow*, (Surrey: Conflict Studies Research Centre, 1997). The second Chechen war has again caused serious refugee flows as more than 300,000 people fled the Russian bombardment and took refuge in neighbouring states. Tracey German and Tamara Pataracia, 'Cehechen Refugees on the Move', *The World Today*, vol. 56, no. 4, (April 2000), pp. 7-8; Alice Lagnado, '400 Killed in Russian Blitz on Dagestan', *The Times*, 17 August 1999; *The Independent*, 25 November 1999.

[32]*Statement of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Chechnya*, 12 December 1994; *Turkish Foreign Ministry Denies Training Chechnians in Turkey*, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 23 October 1995; *Soguk Savas Sonrasinda Milletlerarasi Iliskiler*, (Istanbul: Harp Akademileri Komutanligi Yayinlari, 1996), p. 111.

call for mediation.[33] Thus, while Demirel received the Chechen leader in 1993, Ankara did not provide the Chechens with any official assistance.[34] Similarly, on the eve of his visit to Moscow in 1999, the Turkish premier Ecevit reiterated Turkey's neutrality in the conflict and added: 'This is Russia's internal matter and we give importance to preserve Russia's territorial integrity as much as we do for Turkey.'[35]

Despite the mounting public pressure, Turkey's own struggle against separatist PKK guerrillas increased Turkish reluctance to get involved, lest Moscow increase its support to the PKK. There were even suspicions in Ankara that Russia was using the Kurdish card in order to weaken the Turkish position with regards to the proposed Baku-Ceyhan route of the Caspian energy pipelines.[36] Turkish deputy prime minister Tansu Ciller was warned explicitly during her visit to Moscow in 1996 that if Ankara got involved in Chechnya, Russia would intensify its links with the PKK.[37] On the same lines, Albert Chernishev, the Russian ambassador to Turkey, used a Russian saying when issuing a warning to the Turkish authorities about interfering in Chechnya: 'do not throw stones at your neighbour's window if your house has windows as well.'[38]

The Russians, for their part, were worried about Caucasian solidarity movements in Turkey which, they feared, might support an independent Chechnya.[39] In fact, Russia

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[33]'Turkey Tries to Save Face on Chechnya Crisis', *Turkish Probe,* 23 December 1994, p. 12.

[34]Malik Mufti, 'Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 52, no. 1, (Winter 1998), p. 38.

[35]'Basbakan Ecevit: Cecenistan Ic Sorun', *Zaman,* 4 November 1999.

[36]Sezer, 'Turkish', *op.cit.*, p. 106.

[37]Samil Tayyar, *Refahyol Tutanaklari,* (Ankara: Umit, 1997), p. 141.

[38]Selcuk Gultasli, 'Chechens Disappointed with Ankara's Response', *Turkish Probe,* 26 December 1999.

[39]Moscow feared that Chechen uprising for independence, if accomplished, could encourage the other nineteen autonomous republics within Russia to follow the example. For example Boris Berezovsky, one of the top aide of president Yeltsin in security issues, expressed Moscow's concern, 'but what next, do we let Dagestan go, then Tatarstan? What next?'. Quoted in Graeme Herd, *Russia in Crisis: The Disintegration of the*

permitted a PKK organised Kurdish conference to take place in Moscow in early 1994 and 1997, which included Kurdish groups from the former Eastern block countries.[40] In 1995, Russia permitted the opening of a Kurdish office on its territories and allowed the Kurdish parliament in exile to convene in Moscow. While one Russian newspaper, *Moskowski Komsomelets,* published claims that the GRU, Russian military intelligence, had given US$10 million to the PKK in the mid-1990s, as part of its effort to distract Turkey's attention from the Chechen war.[41] Finally, the 450-seat Russian State Duma overwhelmingly passed a resolution (298-0, with one abstention) urging the government to grant refuge to the PKK leader Ocalan after he was forced out of Syria in 1998.[42] In 1995, Turkey and Russia signed a 'Protocol to Prevent Terrorism', in which Ankara agreed not to allow volunteers to go and fight in Chechnya or sell arms to the Chechens. In return, Russia promised not to allow the PKK to operate within its territories. Thus, Turkey was forced to take a low profile in the entire Caucasus region.[43]

This antagonised public opinion as well as the 47 official Caucasian solidarity groups in Turkey, who had become quite active in pressurising the government to take tougher action against Russia over Chechnya. Chechen leader Jokhar Dudayev led the way by arguing that 'a stronger Caucasia means a stronger Turkey.'[44] Thousands of people, mainly ethnic Caucasians, staged demonstrations in Istanbul to condemn the Russian offensive and to show

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Federation?, (London: Brassey's for the Centre for Defence Studies, 1998), p. 31; 'Turkey: Elusive Golden Apple', *The Economist,* 8 June 1996, p. 17.

[40]Semih D. Idiz, 'Developments in Russia Bad News for Turkey', *Turkish Probe,* 3 March 1994, p. 13; *Sabah,* 14 February 1997.

[41]'Russia Provided Money for PKK', *Turkish Daily News,* 28 February 2000.

[42]Sezer, 'Turkish', *op.cit.*, p. 106.

[43]Robert Olson, 'The Kurdish Question and Chechnya: Turkish and Russian Foreign Policies since the Gulf War', *Middle East Policy,* vol. 4, no. 3, (March 1996), pp. 111-2.

[44]Tansu Yildirim, 'Cecenistan Sorunu ve Turkiye' in *Degisen Dunya ve Turkiye,* Faruk Sonmezoglu (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1995), pp. 212-4. He also expressed their desire to join the oil pipeline, which would be built between Turkey and Azerbaijan, opposing the Russian proposal. *Milliyet and Zaman*, 29 January 1994.

support for Chechen independence while smaller protests were held in several other cities.[45] It also appeared that some Turkish citizens joined the fight and often donated funds.[46] Fuat Bol, a leading columnist in the Istanbul-based daily *Turkiye*, wrote 'the safety of Turkey's eastern borders depend upon the stability in the Caucasus. Instead of trying to prevent a human tragedy in the Caucasus, where civilians have been killed or have had to migrate, we are shaking hands with the Russians.'[47] Hence, the representatives of Turkey's ethnic Caucasian communities criticised Ankara's official stand as too weak in the face of successive Russian attacks against what they considered to be a sovereign state. They argued that Turkish acceptance of Chechnya as a domestic Russian issue was a historical mistake and would never be forgotten by the Chechen people.[48] As Ilhan Muktedir, the secretary of the Caucasia-Chechen Solidarity Committee argued: 'the West views the Chechen issue as an internal matter for their own reasons, which is quite understandable considering their interests, but it is obvious that Turkey's moral responsibilities and its real interests are not necessarily the same.'[49]

8.3. Oil politics: A new 'great game'

The discovery of vast oil reserves in the Caucasus raised Turkish-Russian rivalries to a new level. In fact, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Caspian Sea Basin, described as 'the Persian Gulf of the twenty-first century', became a potential hotbed of international tension and instability.[50] It has even been suggested that a new version of the 'great game' is

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[45]'Turkey Tries to Save Face on Chechnya Crisis', *Turkish Probe,* 23 December 1994, p. 12.

[46]*Turkish Probe,* 26 December 1999.

[47]*Turkiye,* 8 November 1999.

[48]*Turkish Probe,* 26 December 1999.

[49]'Turkey Fears Transcaucasia will be another Yugoslavia', *Turkish Probe,* 16 December 1994, pp. 10-1. Ilhan Muktedir, 'Cecenistan'in Bagimsizlik Ilaninin Hukuki Dayanaklari', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), p. 328.

[50]Selcuk Solakoglu, 'Uluslararasi Hukukta Hazar'in Statusu Sorunu', *AUSBFD*, vol. 53, nos. 1-4, (1998), pp. 107-20; R. K. Zhulaman and S. K. Kushkumbaev, 'Problems of the Caspian Area: Geopolitical Parallels and

being played out, not in Central Asia—the site of the original great power rivalry in the nineteenth century—but in the Caspian region.[51]

No doubt, Turkey's close proximity to these huge untapped energy reserves further enhanced its strategic importance. In addition to the rich oil reserves of the Caspian Sea, the region, which lies between Russia, Iran and Turkey, is strategically important for Ankara since potential oil and gas pipelines from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to Turkey would most likely cross through the Transcaucasus.[52]

Although Turkey is close to the world's major energy sources, it is not self-sufficient in fuel requirements.[53] As a result of steady economic growth, rapid industrialisation, population growth and fast urbanisation Turkey's energy demands are constantly increasing. Energy demand for Turkey is expected to increase by an average of 6.7 percent annually until 2010, resulting in Turkey importing 60 percent of its energy requirements in the near future.[54]

Similarly, Russia is concerned not only that it does not control an energy-rich sector of the Caspian Sea, but also that it may lose its sphere of influence in the Transcaucasus and

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Meridians', *Contemporary Central Asia*, vol. 2, no. 1, (March 1998), pp. 1-20; S. Frederick Starr, Thomas R. Stauffer and Julia Nanay, 'Symposium-Caspian Oil: Pipelines and Politics', *Middle East Policy*, vol. 5, no. 4, (January 1998), pp. 27-49.

51The Caspian Sea basin involves 5 Caspian littoral states: Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan. Estimates of proven and possible reserves of oil and natural gas across the Caspian Basin is believed to be around 200bn barrels of oil equivalent, the third largest storehouse after the Middle East and Siberia. Rosemarie Forsyt, *The Politics of Oil in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, Adelphi Paper, no. 300, (London: IISS, 1996), p. 11; Gareth M. Winrow, 'Turkish Policy toward the Central Asia and Transcaucasus' in *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 116.

52It was projected that Turkey would receive US$100 million income in the form of pipeline transit fees per year in addition to secondary benefits. *NTV* (Turkish News Channel), 18 November 1999.

53Brent Sasley, 'Turkey's Energy Politics in the Post-Cold War Era', *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, vol. 2, no. 4, (November 1998).

54*Turkey and Pipelines: An Energy Bridge*, (Ankara: Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997); http://www.tpao.gov.tr/rprte/energy.htm; F. S. Larrabee, 'US and European Policy toward Turkey and the Caspian Basin' in *Allies Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1998), p. 155; Temel Iskit, 'Turkey: A New Actor in the Field of Energy Politics?, *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (March-May 1996), p. 67.

Central Asia. This concern translated into Russian policies attempting to limit Western influence in the region while promoting Russian control.[55] Thus, Moscow was determined to ensure that the Central Asians and the Azerbaijanis remain to some extent economically and hence politically dependent on Russia by insisting that the pipelines, which transport oil from these states, continued to flow through its territory.[56] By the middle of 1993, oil had become the driving force behind Russian activities as Moscow began to focus on gaining a monopoly over the region's energy sources.[57] Russian efforts to restore its much reduced politico-military presence in the region at the expense of outside forces, notably Turkey, should be seen from this perspective. Consequently, Turkey had to tread carefully, once again taking into account, Russian interests in the region with the view of avoiding conflict and tension at a time where former Russian president Yeltsin openly talked about 'the oil pipeline war'.[58] As will be discussed later, staunch pro-Turkish Azeri president Elchibey's decision to favour the Turkish route, Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, and to transport Azeri oil to world markets prompted Russia to take some drastic measures including support for Armenia in the Azeri-Armenian war and aiding a military coup to overthrow the anti-Russian Elchibey government.

Similarly the support given for the same route by the Tbilisi and Baku governments resulted in several assassination attempts against the Georgian and the Azeri presidents, which were allegedly planned by Moscow.[59] A similar attempt made against the Armenian

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[55]Cynthia M. Croissant and Michael P. Croissant, 'The Caspian Sea Status Dispute: Context and Implications', *Eurasian Studies*, no. 4, (Winter 1996-1997), p. 37.

[56]Winrow, 'Turkey', *op.cit.*, p. 44.

[57]Michael P. Croissant, 'Oil and Russian Imperialism in the Transcaucasus', *Eurasian Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, (Spring 1996), p. 16.

[58]Sedat Sertoglu, 'Buyuk Oyun', *Sabah*, 16 February 1998.

[59]For example, in the wake of the assassination attempt against president Eduard Shevardnadze, the Georgian parliament called for full access to Russia's five military bases in the country arguing on grounds that the

president prompted the Turkish press to call this series of incidents 'a grand Russian game' to secure the transportation of Caucasian oil through its territory by destabilizing the regional countries through which other alternative oil routes would pass.[60] In other words, Russia made it clear that there could be no real progress developing Central Asia and Caspian region's energy and other resources without Russia's consent, and if possible, without Russian participation.[61]

In these circumstances, Turkey's determination to ensure Azeri oil was transported through its territory to the world markets became a source of tension and rivalry between the two countries. Turkey argued that the proposed Russian route, which inevitably included the use of the Turkish Straits to reach the Mediterranean from the Black Sea, would make the Straits a canal of tankers and would further increase the amount of oil deliveries being shipped through the Turkish straits from around 5 million tones per year to 45 million-50 million tones. This in turn would bring potential environmental risks to Turkey's largest city, Istanbul, and the entire region of Marmara where 20 million people reside, as well as increase the risk of oil tanker collisions due to congestion.[62] In this context, in 1994, Turkey adopted new regulations for the Straits, which introduced new restrictions on the passage of oil tankers in terms of time periods and the amount of oil to be shipped.[63] The UN International Maritime Organisation (IMO) approved the new amendments.[64] However,

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attackers might be being shielded at the bases, while Shevardnadze linked it to a struggle over oil revenues 'a possible positive decision on the transit of Caspian oil across Georgia's territory gives rise to great resistance on the part of certain forces.' *BBC News,* 10 February 1998.

[60]Sertoglu, *Ibid.*

[61]Nancy D. Smith, 'Central Asia's New "Great Game"', *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 October 1996; Anthony Robinson, 'Oil Around Risky Waters', Financial Times, 17 June 1998.

[62]M. A. Gokirmak, 'Turkiye-Rusya Iliskileri ve Petrol Tasimaciligi Sorunu: Jeopolitik Bir Degerlendirme' in *Degisen Dunya ve Turkiye,* Faruk Sonmezoglu (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1995), pp. 169-75; Sukru Elekdag, 'Diplomasi, Petrol ve Avrasya Staratejik Dengesi', *Milliyet*, 23 December 1996.

[63]*Turkish Probe*, 8 July 1994.

[64]'Turkish Diplomatic Victory on Straits', *Newspot*, 10 June 1994.

Russia refused to accept the new regulations on political rather than technical grounds, and argued that the new regulations conflict with Turkey's international obligations under the Montreux Convention of 1936 which regulated passage through the straits.[65] As such, Russia initiated an alternative plan, the 'orthodox project' or sea-land-sea project that would use the route from the Bulgarian port of Bourgas to the Greek Aegean port of Alexandropolis, they bypassing the straits. Russia convinced Bulgaria and Greece on the viability of this project in 1994.[66]

Azerbaijan, Turkey and the US supported the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline for the transportation of Azeri oil. It would cross Turkey via Azerbaijan and Iran or through Armenia and Nakhichevan, or across Georgia before reaching the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan, from where it would be shipped to consumer markets. It would also carry crude oil and natural gas from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan with additional pipelines.[67] The Iranian option as a possible route for the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline was out of the question due to poor Iranian-Western relations, and the ongoing Azeri-Armenian conflict did not make the Armenian alternative feasible.[68] Thus, the only remaining route was the Georgian one, which would carry the oil to the Georgian Black Sea port of Soupsa to Ceyhan with a new line across Turkey.[69] Besides Turkey and the US,[70] this project was supported by all the

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[65]F. Kovalev, 'Caspian Oil: Russian Interests', *International Affairs* (Moscow), vol. 43, no. 3, (1997), p. 53.

[66]Ferai Tunc, 'Baku-Ceyhan Suya Dusuyor', *Hurriyet*, 24 March 1997; Heinz Kramer and Friedemann Muller, 'Relations with Turkey and the Caspian Basin Countries' in *Allied Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, Robert D. Blackwill and Michael Sturmer (eds.), (Cambridge: CSIA Studies in International Security, 1997), p. 197.

[67]Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan agreed to transport their crude oil and natural gas through Turkey in 1999. 'Future Dims for Turkey's Pet Project, *Briefing*, 8 March 1999, p. 22; Sami Kohen 'Ismail Cem ile Ufuk Turu', *Milliyet*, 6 January 1997.

[68]Jan H. Kalicki, 'US Policy in the Caspian: Pipelines, Partnership and Prosperity', *Middle East Policy*, vol. 6, no. 2, (2 October 1998), p. 147; 'Competition and American Sanctions Frustrate Iran in the Caspian', *The Economist*, 24 January 1998, p. 61; 'Iran "Best Route to Caspian"', *Financial Times*, 5 May 1998.

[69]I. Resat Ozkan, *Dis Politika: Dis Kapinin Dis Mandali*, (Istanbul: Cinar, 1996), p. 383.

[70]See, Bulent Aras, 'US-Central Asian Relations: A View from Turkey', *MERIA*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January 1997).

Caspian Sea littoral states, with the exception of Russia and Iran, which were all land-locked. Finally, the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline, and a gas pipeline under the Caspian Sea from Turkmenistan to Baku was signed during the OSCE summit in Istanbul between Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia and Kazakhstan in November 1999.[71] Thus despite setbacks on the Turkish route, Ankara was able to push its preferred position with strong backing from Washington. Otherwise, it would have been more difficult for Turkey to contend with the Russian factor as Moscow views its monopoly over energy transportation central to its continued dominant position in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Indeed, Moscow and Tehran considered these developments as detrimental to their national interests and joined forces in issuing a strong protest against a trans-Caspian pipeline.[72]

Hence, Russian interests and its willingness to exert itself in the oil projects of the region delayed and precluded Turkey from being able to take advantage of its affinity and geo-strategic proximity to the Caucasus. It was only able to sign an agreement with the aforementioned states on the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project with the backing of the US in 1999. Thus, in this regard, it has, at the very best, been delayed in gaining the benefits of this project which in turn has directly impacted in its capacity to develop into a serious economic and strategic power in the region and in the eyes of the West.

8.4. Resurgence of Russian power on Turkish borders

The growing Russian military presence in Caucasia, particularly in Transcaucasia became a source of tension in Turco-Russian relations throughout the 1990s. As will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, this ongoing conflict was instrumental in limiting a more powerful Turkish role. Accordingly, Turkish policies in Caucasia had to carefully take into account

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[71] *NTV* (Turkish News Channel), 18 November 1999.

[72] Gennaey Chufrin, 'The Caspian Sea Basin: The Security Dimensions' in *SIPRI Yearbook 1999*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 218 and p. 237.

Russian strategic interests in order to avoid conflict with Moscow. This policy of 'we should not provoke Russia' combined with a resurgence of clear Russian politico-military influence in the area; the ongoing almost region-wide conflicts; and the West's lack of interest in regional matters convinced Ankara that it should avoid conflict at all costs and focus on cooperation, particularly in the economic field.

There are several reasons for Russian military expansion in the region. The first related to Russia's political ambitions. Russia attempted to re-establish its former influence in the area and to contain instability before it spilt over into its territory.[73] Also, in view of the ongoing instability, Russia was afraid of the possibility of a security vacuum in the region which would be filled by other powers -whether they were regional players, like Turkey or Iran, or global ones like the US.[74] The existence of rich Caspian oil reserves and the interest of outsiders was another reason for Russia's concern. Indeed, the US, declared Azerbaijan as a zone of vital interests as early as 1994.[75] Moreover, though remote and underdeveloped, the northern Caucasus was of strategic importance for Russia and was a crucial buffer, as well as filter between Russia, Turkey and Iran,[76] pushing Moscow to re-establish its dominance over

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[73]For Russian interests in the region see, A. Zaitsev, 'Russia and Transcaucasia', *International Affairs* (Moscow), vol. 43, no. 5, (1997), pp. 180-187; Margot Light, 'Russia and Transcaucasia' in *Transcaucasian Borders*, John F. R. Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg and Richard Schofield (eds.), (London: UCL Press, 1996), pp. 46-7; Fred Halliday, 'The Empires Strike back? Russia, Iran and the New Republics', *The World Today*, vol. 51, no. 11, (November 1995), p. 220.

[74]Dimitri Trenin, 'Russia's Security Interests and Policies in the Caucasus Region' in *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*, Bruno Coppieters (ed.), (Brussels: VUB University Press, 1996), p. 94.

[75]Boris Nikolin, 'The Threat from the Caucasus', *Russian Politics and Law*, vol. 36, no. 1, (January-February 1998), p. 42; Graham E. Fuller, 'Central Asia and American National Interests' in *Central Asia: Its Strategic Importance and Future Prospects,* Hafeez Malik (ed.), (Hampshire and London: Mcmillan, 1994), p. 140. Moscow became reluctant to have a third actor outside the CIS as an arbiter or mediator in the regional conflicts. Alexander Rahr, 'Overlapping and Differing Turkish and German Interests in the CIS with Particular reference to the Russian Federation and Transcaucasia' in *Turkish-German Round Table Meeting*, (Ankara: SAM, 1996), p. 23.

[76]Havva Gok, 'Chechen Crisis and Russia's Future', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 19, nos. 1-2, (1995), p. 40.

Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.[77]

In 1996, as a means of re-establishing its position, Russia, much to Turkey's frustration, increased its military presence in the North Caucasus to a level greater than had been agreed upon under the CFE Treaty of 1990 (which was later modified by the Flank Agreement in 1996).[78] Apart from changing the regional military balances, Ankara was also concerned by the fact that increased Russian forces in the region could pose a serious threat to the independence of the Transcucasian republics where Turkey had growing strategic interests.

Furthermore, Russia invested considerable efforts in becoming the sole peacemaker in the former Soviet republics, denying a role to any foreign forces in the region.[79] It even stationed troops in states which had not given their consent, such as in Moldova and Georgia.[80] Russian peacekeeping forces were integrated as a policy instrument as part of a wider strategy to advance Russian interests in Georgia, for example, using means short of war.[81] From the Russian perspective, similar to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Georgia's ethnic composition offered Russia a suitable ground to restore its declining influence. This could be seen as evidence of Moscow's policy of 'divide and rule' in order to reach its objectives.[82] Indeed, Georgia's inability to respond soon resulted in its loss of effective control over the autonomous entities in South Ossettia and Abkhazia and their move to *de facto* independence

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[77]William Hale, 'Turkey, the Black Sea and Transcaucasia' in *Transcaucasian Borders*, John F. R.. Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg and Richard Schofield (eds.), (London: UCL Press, 1996), p. 69.

[78]For the Treaty and the Agreement on Adaptation of CFE Treaty signed in 1999, and Russian arguments not to comply with the Treaty see, *http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/cfe/cfetreate.htm*; Gulnur Aybet, 'The CFE Treaty: The Way Forward for Conventional Arms Control in Europe', *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (March-May 1996), pp. 25-6; Adam Boger, 'Russia and the CFE Treaty: The Limits of Coercion', *The Defence Monitor*, vol. 14, no. 19, (December 2000).

[79]Russian president Yeltsin argued 'the time has come for distinguished international organisations, including the UN, to grant Russia special powers of a guarantor of peace and stability in regions of the former USSR.' 'Russia Has No Special Minority Rights Claim', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 14 April 1993.

[80]Boger, *op.cit.*

[81]Dov Lynch, *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan*, (Hampshire and London: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp. 127-49.

[82]Erik Cornell, *Turkey in the 21st Century: Opportunities, Challenges, Threats*, (Richmond: Curzon, 2001), p. 7.

by the end of 1993.[83] The Tbilisi government was forced to agree to the deployment of a Russian-dominated peacekeeping force in the region following a cease-fire in the South Ossettian conflict mediated by Russia. In the same way, after the collapse of Georgian resistance in Abkhazia in October 1993, viewing the Western refusal to assemble a UN peacekeeping force, there was no other alternative for the Tbilisi government but to join the CIS and to allow five Russian military bases in the country in return for support for Georgia's effort to regain control over Abkhazia.[84] Furthermore, Russia deployed about 8,000 troops in Georgia, and entered into an agreement to deploy more than 10,000 Russian border guards to patrol the borders with Turkey and the Black Sea coast, while Georgia's meagre forces of 5,000 border troops protected its other frontiers.[85]

This, move was viewed by Turkey as a Russian attempt to dominate Caucasia. Turkey expressed doubts as to whether 'a country sending its military forces to another unilaterally [can be] a peacekeeper' and argued that such a force should be under the umbrella of the CSCE.[86] It also made it clear that it considered such developments a major security concern due to its own proximity to, and interest in, the region. Thus, for example, in 1994 Turkish prime minister Ciller expressed the Turkish view that growing nationalism in Russia and the expansionist tendency of the post-Soviet leadership caused a real threat or as the Turkish chief of staff Dogan Gures warned 'Russia is posing a greater threat today than during the Cold War.'[87]

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[83]Jonathan Aves, 'National Security and Military Issues in the Transcaucasia: The Cases of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia' in *State Building and Military Power in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, Bruce Parrot (ed.), (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), pp. 214-5.

[84]Russia agreed to close two of its four bases in Georgia and for negotiating the closure of the other two.

[85]Michael Gordon, 'Georgia Bridles at Russia's Heavy Hand', *International Herald Tribune*, 14 January 1997.

[86]'Russia Struggles with CFE-Again', *Turkish Probe*, 24 June 1994, p. 10; A. Ahat Andican, *Degisim Surecinde Turk Dunyasi,* (Istanbul: Emre, 1996), pp. 269-72.

[87]'Russia: A Threat or not Threat?', *Turkish Probe*, 10 June 1994, p. 2; *Turkish Probe*, 3 June 1994, p. 13.

CHAPTER NINE

TURKISH POLICY IN CAUCASIA AND CENTRAL ASIA: THWARTED AMBITION

9.1. The new geopolitics of Caucasia

The dissolution of the Soviet Union not only had a major impact in the political map of Caucasia but also significantly changed Turkey's regional environment as it led to the emergence of new republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia on Turkey's north-east borders. Turkey could now freely forge close relationships with its relatively weak neighbours for the first time in a generation. The emergence of Georgia and, in particular, Azerbaijan with whom Turkey shared ethnic, linguistic and cultural ties, offered new prospects for Turkey's external relations. Apart from relieving burden of the existing beside the Russian superpower, the new political environment also provided a significant market opportunity for Turkish goods which were desperate to find new alternatives following the loss of the Middle East market after the Gulf War of 1990-91. In particular, the discovery of vast oil resources in the Caspian basin and the possibility of establishing energy corridors that would be routed through Turkey not only offered Turkey the opportunity to meet its growing energy needs but also offered the increased prospect of political influence.

Moreover, as in the Balkans, common cultural and historic ties with the region were an important asset in Turkey's attempt to strengthen relations. Turkey's multi-ethnic and multi-cultural identity with around 10 million Turkish citizens with links to the entire region (Crimea, Georgia, Abkhazia, Azerbaijan, Chechnya, Dagestan, etc.) made improved ties with the region both imperative and desirable.[1] In this context, it could even be argued that there was a psychological factor in Turkey's involvement in the region. As these ethnic groups rushed to establish links with their kinsmen in the Caucasus after the

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[1]Paul B. Henze, *Turkey and Ataturk's Legacy,* (Haarlem: SOTA, 1998), pp. 172-3.

decline of the Soviet Union, they played an important role in Turkey's improving economic and cultural relations with the region.[2] In turn, the Turkish public embraced the whole Caucasus, particularly Azerbaijan where there was no language barrier, with great enthusiasm.

In fact, as well as the Azeri-Armenian war, developments in both north Caucasia and Transcaucasia highlighted to Turkey numerous uncertainties and conflicts in the region. This was further exacerbated as feelings of irredentism, separatism, and territorial claims and counter claims, which had been long suppressed under Soviet rule, came to the forefront.[3] For instance, as will be shown later, in 1996 there were at least five separate wars in progress in the Caucasus region, involving no fewer than twelve ethnic groups, which in many respects presented Turkey with far more problems than coexistence with Soviet Russia ever did.[4] The ensuing Chechen wars in north Caucasia, ethnic conflict in Georgia and, in particular, the Azeri-Armenian war in Transcaucasia proved that the communist threat to Turkey's northern borders had been replaced with other serious risks and dangers which hampered Turkish success in gaining further access to the region.

As Turkey was being increasingly drawn into regional conflagration, Turkish policy makers found themselves in the predicament of trying to reconcile domestic demands for ethnic/religious solidarity with external realities. For example, Turkish citizens of Caucasian origin managed to build up a strong Caucasian lobby and with the backing of the public and other political forces pressured political leaders into formulating policies favourable the region. On the other hand, Ankara had to take into consideration other factors, such as its traditional policy of non-involvement in regional affairs. Consequently,

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[2]Baskin Oran 'Turkiye'nin Balkan ve Kafkas Politikasi', *AUSBF Dergisi,* vol. 50, nos. 1-2, (January-June 1995), p. 274.

[3]For the dynamics and sources of the regional instabilities see, Gela Charkviani, 'Georgia, Transcaucasus and Beyond', *Milletlerarasi Munasebetler Turk Yilligi,* (Ankara: AUSBF, 1994), p. 91; Stephen Blank, 'New Trends in Caucasian Security', *Eurasian Studies,* no. 13, (Spring 1998), pp. 2-11.

consensus among elite and public opinion on foreign policy objectives was not evident, as was evidenced during the Chechen war, the Azeri-Armenian war and the conflict between Georgia and ethnic Abkhazians.

Moreover, having been isolated from the region for decades Turkey was caught completely unprepared by these new developments and therefore Turkish policy makers found themselves grappling with new, diverse and multiple challenges. Furthermore, as discussed earlier, growing instability naturally made Russia's return to the region easier and helped Moscow to re-establish its political and military supremacy in the midst of rising Russian nationalism. This in turn increasingly jeopardised Turkish interests and marginalized Turkey. What is more, it also became apparent that the support given to Turkey by its Western allies, the US in particular, in the early years of the post-Soviet era vis-à-vis the regional developments was insufficient and effectively meant that Ankara was left alone to deal with diverse regional issues. As a result, initial expectations about Turkey becoming a significant regional power in Caucasia were, to a very large extent, proved wrong.

9.1.1. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: A test case for Turkey's role as a regional power

As with the Chechen issue, the territorial dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia developed into an important issue for Turkey both domestically and externally during the early 1990s. The conflict quickly overshadowed initial euphoria about a Turkish role in Transcaucasia. As the dispute evolved into a full-scale war, its repercussions seriously challenged Turkey's external relations, in general, and its Caucasian policy, in particular.

The power vacuum that developed following the collapse of the Soviet Union offered a valuable opportunity for Nagorno-Karabakh, inhabited mainly by Armenians and incorporated into the territory of Azerbaijan by the Soviets in 1921, to unite with

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[4]James Pattifer, *The Turkish Labyrinth: Ataturk and the New Islam,* (Penguin Books, 1997), pp. 205-6.

Armenia,[5] and the Armenian government adopted a resolution on the unification of Nagorno-Karabakh. This, however, led to growing antagonism between Azeris and Armenians, who had longstanding historical, religious and cultural differences.[6] It soon became clear that the absence of political control and, more importantly, the absence of effective regional and international mechanisms akin to the bi-polar international system of the Cold War years fuelled the crisis. Indeed, by time of a ceasefire in 1994, Armenia had seized approximately one-fifth of Azerbaijan's territory. Nagorno-Karabakh became entirely Azeri-free and the autonomous Azeri enclave of Nakhichevan along the Turkish border was sealed off from the rest of the country.[7] The conflict caused massive casualties, and led some one million civilians to flee their homes, forcing Azerbaijan to shelter them.[8]

Initially Turkey remained neutral and pursued a balanced policy in its relations with both Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, it was soon forced to adopt a more pro-Azerbaijani stance in the wake of Armenian military advances into Azerbaijani territories and amidst growing domestic pressure and security concerns.[9] As will be discussed later, this dashed Turkish hopes of mending historical differences with Armenia and made the latter a key Russian ally in the area. Ankara's support was most evidenced when Azeri

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[5]'Armenian Suspicions of Turkey Continue', *Dateline Turkey,* 6 October 1990; G. Tabrizi and Reza Sabri, 'Azerbaijan and Armenian Conflict and Coexistence' in *From the Gulf To Centrnl Asia: Players in the New Great Game,* Anoushirasan Ehteshami (ed.), (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1994), p. 150.

[6]David Rieff, 'Nagarno-Karabakh: Case Study in Ethnic Strife', *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 76, no. 2, (March-April 1997), p. 42.

[7]For the negotiations leading to the cease-fire see, V. Kazimirov, 'A History of the Karabakh Conflict', *International Affairs* (Moscow), vol. 42, no. 3, (1996), pp. 182-195; Stephan H. Astourian, 'The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: Dimensions, Lessons, and Prospects', *Mediterranean Quarterly,* vol. 5, no. 4, (Fall 1994), p. 94; Michael Mihalka, 'Nagorno-Karabakh and Russian Peacekeeping: Prospects for a Second Dayton', *International Peacekeeping,* vol. 3, no. 3, (Autumn 1996), pp. 17-19.

[8]Oles M. Smolansky, 'Russia and Transcaucasia: The Case of Nagorno-Karabakh' in *Regional Power Rivalries in the New Eurasia: Russia, Turkey and, Iran,* Alvin Z. Rubinstein and Oles M. Smolansky (eds.), (New York and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), pp. 202-3; Selcuk Korkud, 'Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: Some Facts', *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (March-May 1996), pp. 146-50.

[9]'Demirel: Tarafsiz Kalamayiz', *Cumhuriyet*, 4 March 1992.

civilians were killed in the Karabakh town of Khojali in early 1992.[10] At this time, Ankara refused to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia and helped Azerbaijan in its economic blockade against Armenia. Turkish premier Demirel warned the Armenians that 'if they continue to kill the Azerbaijanis, Turkish public opinion would not allow the Turkish government to be hand-in-hand with Armenia. It would be very difficult.'[11]

There are several reasons behind Ankara's decision to side with Baku while avoiding unilateral particularly military intervention. The most important of these was the existing ties with Azerbaijan and the presence of a large Caucasian and Azeri population in Turkey. This in turn led to domestic pressure with massive demonstrations taking place in major cities calling the government to provide military support to the Muslim Azerbaijanis of Turkic descent.[12] In particular, nationalist and Islamist groups, as well as various Caucasian groups organised protests. The Nationalist Action Party (MHP) even prepared an action schedule so that demonstrations in support of Azeris could be held throughout the country.[13] On one occasion, it was also reported that hundreds of volunteers, mostly youngsters, queued outside an army conscription office in one of the western towns to join the fight against the Armenians.[14] Again, according to one survey conducted in 1993, nearly 38 percent of those polled wanted Turkey to intervene in the conflict while 49 percent favoured the use economic and political sanctions first, followed by military intervention if these were not effective. Only 13 percent demanded that Turkey should stay out of the conflict.[15]

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[10] 'Ermeni Teroru: 20 Olu', *Cumhuriyet*, 12 February 1992.

[11] 'Blaine Harden, 'Turkish Premier Voices Worries over Pull of Ethnic Conflict in Caucasus', *The Washington Post*, 19 March 1992.

[12] 'Kamoyu Ermenileri Kiniyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 9 March 1992; 'Turkish Public Reacts Strongly Against Armenian Attack on Azerbaijan', *Newspot*, 8 April 1993.

[13] 'Ulkuculerin Eylem Takvimi', *Cumhuriyet*, 7 March 1992.

[14] 'Ilk Cumada Ulkucu-Islamci Rekabeti', *Cumhuriyet*, 7 March 1992.

[15] Idris Bal, *Turkey's Relations with West and the Turkic Republics: The Rise and Fall of the 'Turkish Model*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 75.

The government also came under strong criticism from opposition parties, the media and other pressure groups which claimed that Turkey's new image as a regional power and role model for the newly-emerged Turkic republics would be irrecoverably damaged if Ankara remained neutral. For example, Bulent Ecevit, the former prime minister and the leader of the Democratic Left Party (DSP), argued that, 'the only thing Ankara does is to call on the West for help without making any real effort itself. Surely this will shake new republics' trust in Turkey.'[16] He then urged the government to consider military intervention.[17] Mesut Yilmaz, the leader of the right-wing ANAP and the former prime minister, asked for troop deployments along the Turkish-Armenian border to deter the Armenians.[18] 'The government seriously believes that the Karabakh crisis will be solved through telephone conversations or simply taking the issue to international organisations' said one senior Refah Party deputy.[19] Kamran Inan, a former diplomat and minister, accused the government of 'offering Azerbaijan to Moscow on a plate.'[20] Ergun Balci, a leading columnist at leftist Istanbul daily *Cumhuriyet*, blamed the government following the Armenian attack on neighbouring Nakhichevan, for failing to show the necessary determination in trying to stop these attacks on its doorstep. 'You cannot continue pursuing such a foreign policy by avoiding every single crisis with a fear of entanglement.'[21]

What's more, as the Azeri president pointed out, throughout the crisis, albeit never officially, Baku turned to Ankara for economic, political and military help.[22] Indeed,

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[16]'Karabag Tartismasi Meclisi Karistirdi', *Cumhuriyet*, 5 March 1992.
[17]'Ecevit Askeri Mudahele Istedi', *Cumhuriyet*, 8 May 1992.
[18]'Yilmaz Gerekirese Birlik Kaydirilsin', *Cumhuriyet*, 5 March 1992.
[19]*Nokta*, 17 May 1992.
[20]Interview with Kamran Inan, *Soguk Savastan*, op.cit., p. 216.
[21]Ergun Balci, 'Nahcivan, Karabag ve Turkiye'nin Politikasi', *Cumhuriyet*, 7 May 1992.
[22]'Demirel Turkey Supports the Just Demands of Azerbaijan', *Newspot*, 9 February 1994.

Nakhichevan called on Ankara to intervene to stop the Armenian offensives in 1992.[23] Furthermore, the decision of Moscow to side with Armenia (after initial support for the Azeris) changed the war's direction in favour of the Armenians. The reason for this policy change, according to a senior Azeri official, was that 'Moscow is preparing for the eventuality of having to withdraw the Red Army units from there, so it wants to leave behind a strong Armenia as a strategic ally which will take care of its interests.'[24]

The region was also a priority for Turkey. As Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem put in 1997, the entire region was Turkey's window to Central Asia and Russia.[25] In essence therefore, given Turkey's immediate economic and political interests in Central Asia and crucial economic ties with Russia, as well as the existence of energy corridors in the region, it was hoped that the Caucasus would be transformed into a 'belt of peace' and become a buffer zone between Russia and Turkey.[26] Additionally, a 'greater Armenia' was never been a desirable option for Turkey considering the historic animosities between the two nations.

Once again, as witnessed during the Bosnian and the Chechen wars, notwithstanding domestic pressure, Turkey's cautious policies vis-à-vis the Karabakh crises put it in a real dilemma. Failure to rescue Azerbaijan would put Turkey's natural leadership and image as a regional power into question. On the other hand, Turkey's traditional foreign policy did not allow for any adventurous intervention abroad or alignment with Baku unless there was a serious threat to the country's national security. Having been caught by surprise by developments, Turkey found it difficult to formulate a comprehensive policy over how to deal with the issue. There was even a dichotomy among the decision-makers in Ankara on

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[23]'Nahcivan Turkiye'yi Mudaheleye Cagirdi', *Cumhuriyet*, 5 May 1992.
[24]'Russia: Helping or Confusing the Issue', *Turkish Probe,* 6 April 1993, p. 6; Uwe Halbach and Heinrich Tiller, 'Russia and its Southern Flank', *Aussen Politik,* vol. 45, no. 2, (1994), pp. 160-1.
[25]'Ismail Cem Stresses Wide-Angle Foreign Policy Approach', *Turkish Daily News,* 19 July 1997.
[26]Seyfi Tashan, 'The Caucasus and Central Asia: Strategic Implications', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 18,

how to deal with the issue. For example, despite president Ozal's appeals for a tougher line on the issue by suggesting that 'Turkey frighten the Armenians a little bit', the Demirel government chose to pursue more cautious policies: 'We will help but we do not want the military involved. We want a political solution.'[27] Similarly the Turkish army's chief of staff Dogan Gures argued that 'it is so obvious that unilateral actions in the region will make the problem (in the Caucasus) even more difficult. Hence, I believe that international endeavours similar to that in the Balkan and other parts of the world should also be initiated for this region.'[28] Thus, according to the government, the Karabakh and Nakhichevan problems became issues, like the dispute in Bosnia, which had to be solved by the international system and more specifically as Demirel stated 'the CSCE should be the main forum in dealing with this conflict.'[29] It could also be justifiably argued that, as witnessed during the Bosnian conflict, having been unable to affect events beyond its borders due to its own reasons, Turkish policy-makers tried to stay within the limits of traditional Turkish foreign policy rituals and relied on multilateral efforts even though they knew that they would likely fail or become ineffective given their apparent own structural problems.

Ankara was also concerned that such a unilateral action could easily find Turkey opposed by traditional Western allies sympathetic to Armenia as the Armenian diaspora had lobbied the American and French governments to send help to Armenia.[30] Indeed, the US stopped supplying humanitarian aid to Azerbaijan, while president Mitterand's visit to Ankara in 1992 angered Armenians and they staged protests in France. In the end, during

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nos. 3-4, (1993), p. 46.

[27]*Hurriyet,* 7 March 1992.

[28]'Turks Warns of Religious War in Azerbaijan', *The New York Times,* 12 Mart 1992.

[29]*Prime Minister Demirel's Press Conference*, 28 March 1992; 'Prime Minister Demirel Receives Armenian Delegation', *Newspot*, 18 June 1992.

[30]Roderic H. Davison, *Turkey: A Short History,* Third edition, (Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, 1998), p. 223.

the Azeri energy blockade on Armenia Ankara was forced to give the go-ahead for Western help for Armenia, which evidently could be done only through Turkey.[31]

Furthermore, Turkish policy makers feared that such a unilateral intervention, similar that in Cyprus in 1974, would inevitably harm Turkey's prestige in the West and could result in its international isolation.[32] It was also generally accepted that Turkish involvement would increase the risks of an escalation of the conflict, in the worst case scenario leading to a confrontation between Turkey and Russia, possibly involving Iran as well.[33] Favouring caution, Turkey even rejected the Azeri request for some helicopters to be used in the evacuation of civilians and injured personnel fearing that it might rise Russian suspicions about Turkey's role.[34] A real concern given that the commander of the CIS armed forces, Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, threatened that Turkish intervention could result in the outbreak of a Third World War.[35]

Finally, Turkey, waging its own war against the insurgent PKK was already involved in massive military operations, which distracted attention from external issues. Moreover, there was a possibility that certain groups, if united under the Dashnak Party both in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, which had waged violent struggles against Turkey for years, could conduct various forms of low-level conflict. It was also possible that they could join forces with the PKK, which would unite two of Turkey's main security threats, and it was already known that the PKK talked openly of support from, and links to,

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[31]'Azerbaycan'a Yardim Kesildi', *Cumhuriyet*, 31 October 1992; 'Fransa'da Ermeni Gosterisi', *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1992; Freddy De Pauw, 'Turkey's Policies in Transcaucasus' in *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*, Bruno Coppieters (ed.), (Brussels: VUB University Press, 1996), p. 183.

[32]'Karabag'a Mudahele Turkiye'yi Yalnizliga Iter', *Cumhuriyet*, 13 May 1992; Ugur Mumcu, 'Eski Tas Eski Hamam', *Cumhuriyet*, 22 May 1992.

[33]Svante E. Cornell, 'Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh: A Delicate Balance', *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 34, no. 1, (January 1998), p. 51.

[34]Mustafa Aydin, 'Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla Iliskiler' in *Turk Dis Politikasi*, Baskin Oran (ed.), (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2002), p. 404.

[35]'Saposnikof Rahatsizlik Yaratti', *Cumhuriyet*, 22 May 1992.

Armenia.[36] For example, the Kurdish Parliament in exile passed a resolution recognising and marking the Armenian Genocide, an issue which Turkey is deeply sensitive about, and later Ocalan reiterated the PKK's intention to continue cooperation with Armenia.[37] Indeed, Azerbaijan even claimed that PKK and the Armenian forces cooperated in Karabakh.[38] While there was other evidence of this according to the Turkish intelligence service, Armenia-PKK cooperation had been occurring for over a decade and Armenia did provide a training camp near to Yerevan and sold US$1.6 million worth arms to the PKK in 1993.[39] Ocalan later confirmed during his trial that Armenia and the ASALA collaborated with the PKK.[40]

On one occasion in 1992, the Turkish armed forces prepared to respond to a possible Armenian attack on Nakhichevan.[41] Turkey also opened the Nakhichevan border, which could have been viewed as a move to intimidate Armenia.[42] Later in 1993 Turkish premier Ciller announced that she would ask parliament for permission to intervene militarily should the Armenians move on Nakhichevan.[43] Ankara claimed the right to intervene according to the Treaty of Kars signed in 1921 between Turkey and the Soviet Union.[44] Moreover, it appears that Turkey sent some 150 retired senior army officers to train the Azerbaijani armed forces.[45]

However, though Turkey first and foremost sought to mobilise diplomatic channels to

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[36]Stephen J. Blank, 'Turkey's Strategic Engagement in the Former USSR and US Interests' in *Turkey's Strategic Position at the Crossroads of World Affairs,* (PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1993), p. 65.

[37]'Kurdistan Recognises the Armenian Genocide', *http://www.cilicia.com/armo10i_kurdistan.html*

[38]'Karabag'da Ermeni-PKK Elele', *Cumhuriyet*, 12 March 1992.

[39]*Sabah*, 16 March 1999.

[40]*Hurriyet*, 2 June 1999.

[41]*Cumhuriyet*, 21 February 1992.

[42]'PKK'ya Yeni Bir Kapi mi?', *Nokta,* 7 June 1992, pp. 22-4.

[43]'The Armenians are Playing a Dangerous Game They Cannot Win', *Turkish Probe,* 7 September 1993, p. 4.

[44]See, Ismail Soysal, *Turkiye'nin Siyasal Antlasmalari (1920-1945),* (Ankara: TTK, 1989), pp. 17-47.

[45]This was practically all the military help given to the Azeris by Turkey. 'Emekli Turk Generaller Azerbaycan'da', *Cumhuriyet*, 5 July 1992; Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Co-operation,* Second edition, (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 214.

bring the issue onto the Western agenda as well as multilateral organisations such as the CSCE, the UN and NATO.[46] Ankara's intensive diplomatic efforts were instrumental in bringing about the mediation efforts of the CSCE through the 'Minsk Group' organised in June 1992.[47] Turkey also entered into joint political initiatives with Russia to draft a peace plan, which would serve to compliment the Minsk peace process.[48] The result of these interventions was that the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution in 1993, which was followed by another two resolutions demanding a complete Armenian withdrawal from occupied Azeri lands and a return to the negotiations process.[49] Likewise fifty-four CSCE member states, excluding Armenia, accepted Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and again following the Turkish initiatives in 1993, a NATO Communiqué emphasised the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the countries of the region.[50] In this context, Turkey firmly opposed an exclusively CIS peacekeeping presence in the Transcaucasus and declared its readiness to participate in any kind of international operation.[51]

In Ankara's view, Turkish initiatives vis-à-vis the crisis were successful to the extent that the Azeri standpoint was represented at various international forums, which in turn served to neutralise Armenian claims. In the words of Demirel,

> In the beginning the world was ready to side with Armenia against Azerbaijan. However, through consultations with various countries the message was given that if you encourage Armenia you may turn the issue into a Muslim-Christian crisis. In this case, another Middle East may emerge as a result of this. Certain countries neither sided with Armenia nor took a stand against Turkey and Azerbaijan.[52]

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[46]'Turkey's Diplomatic Initiatives on Karabakh', *Newspot,* 26 March 1992.

[47]The Minsk Group has 11 members including Turkey. The other members are:, Armenia, Azerbaijan, France, Germany, Belarus, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Italy, Sweden, Russia and the US.

[48]'Turkish-Russian Joint Initiative on Upper Karabakh', *Newspot,* 29 March 1993.

[49]'The Armenians Stand Condemned for Aggression', *Turkish Probe,* 3 August 1993, p. 13; Oliver Paye and Eric Remacle, 'UN and CSCE Policies in Transcaucasia' in *Contested Borders in the Caucasus,* Bruno Coppieters (ed.), (Brussels: VUB University Press, 1996), pp. 103-36.

[50]'The NATO Summit', *Newspot,* 19 January 1993.

[51]*Prime Minister Demirel's Press Conference,* 28 February 1993.

[52]'Demirel Evaluates the First 500 Days', *Newspot,* 21 April 1993.

However, similar to the Bosnian case Turkey acknowledged that its over reliance on international efforts was evidence of its own inability to act unilaterally. Moreover, its new security environment was no more a primary concern in the capitals of its European allies and the security problems encountered by Turkey did not have the highest priority in the West which faced different threats and challenges.[53] As such, throughout the conflict, Turkey remained the only country that responded to the plight of the Azeris. Western countries did not take a direct interest in the events in Armenia and Azerbaijan. The diplomatic initiatives neither helped to stop Armenian offensives nor forced the Yerevan government to withdraw from the occupied Azeri lands. Premier Ciller expressed Turkey's frustration at this one CSCE meetings 'The success of institutions or organisations depended on political will the member countries could generate, but that unfortunately this political will and determination was not being shown in connection with Bosnia and Karabakh.'[54] The US, Russia and the major European powers, as well as Iran, pursued policies in the conflict, which were favourable to Armenia. Iran collaborated with Armenia in order to contain Turkish goals in the Caucasus and to limit Azeri influence.[55] Tehran was also fully aware that Azeri victories over Armenia could stir separatist sentiments among the ten million Azeris living in north-western Iran (25 per cent of the Iranian population).[56] Even the Turkic republics of Central Asia failed to condemn Armenia, another CIS country, in order to avoid clashing with Russia.

In the end, Turkey's preoccupation, at least in diplomatic terms, with the conflict severely restricted Ankara from focusing on the new foreign policy opportunities that had

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[53]William W. Maggs, 'Armenia and Azerbaijan: Looking Toward the Middle East', *Current History Journal,* vol. 92, no. 570, p. 6.

[54]'CSCE Summit', *Newspot,* 16 December 1994.

[55]James M. Dorsey, 'The Growing Entente between Armenia and Iran', *Middle East International',* no. 439, (4 December 1992), pp. 17-8.

[56]Hanna Y. Freij, 'State Interests vs. Umma: Iranian Foreign Policy in Central Asia, *Middle East Journal,* vol. 50, no. 1, (Winter 1996), pp. 72-3.

presented themselves in Caucasia. While Ankara's inability to do anything but rely on multilateral bodies to stop Armenian advances during the two-year war and to force the Yerevan government to withdraw from Azeri territories significantly undermined Turkey's prestige and credibility in the region. What is more, the military victories of Armenian army no doubt contributed to the fall of pro-Turkish Abulfaz Elchibey who was even said to have been thinking of proposing a federation with Turkey.[57] Indeed, Russia was quick to fill the power vacuum and increased its influence in the area at the expense of Turkey. Moreover, Turkish policy vis-à-vis the region became a hostage to the Azeri-Armenian conflict and thus Yerevan further distanced itself from Ankara, thus becoming Moscow's main regional ally.

9.1.2. Between options and challenges: Bilateral relations with the newly-independent Transcaucasian republics

Faced with new opportunities, instabilities and challenges, including growing Russian politico-military involvement, Turkey tried to extend both bilateral and multilateral relations with its new Caucasian neighbours. As in the Middle East and the Balkans, Turkey looked for new ties that would counterbalance the growing regional anti-Turkish political axis made up of Moscow, Yerevan and, to some extent, Tehran. In this context, Turkey's shared ethnic, historical and cultural ties with Azerbaijan and Georgia served to expand relations, and combined with increasing economic, political, military and cultural relations, and a common fear of the Russia, and the Armenia factor, the two countries developed in natural allies. These ties were further institutionalised with the establishment of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation project (BSECP) in 1992, which aimed to bring economic and political cooperation among the regional countries.

However, historical enmities and Turkey's staunch pro-Azeri policy over the ongoing

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[57]Eric Rouleau , 'The Challenges to Turkey', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 5, (November-December 1993), p. 133. According to Kamran Inan, 'this was nothing than presentation of the opportunities that appeared before it to the Russians on a silver platter.' Quoted in Malik Mufti , 'Daring and Caution in Turkish

Azeri-Armenian war did not provide a positive beginning to improve Turkish-Armenian relations and the Yerevan government adopted more pro-Russian policies in the region. Additionally, the strong Russian presence in the area clearly prevented Turkey from gaining further influence in both Azerbaijan and Georgia. These countries soon became victims of bloody wars and domestic instabilities in which Russia was involved in some way or another. Thus, Turkey refrained from provoking Russia in its policies vis-à-vis Caucasia and tried to extend economic and cultural relations. In this context, economic initiatives, in particular from the private sector, played a profound role in creating a form of economic interdependence with both Azerbaijan and Georgia, and contributed to any rise in Ankara's influence highlighting how economic relations have became so important for Turkey that it mostly relied on these expanding links to secure itself a regional role.[58] Moreover, various non-governmental organisations along with the state extended cultural and educational links, which further helped to consolidate bilateral relations. As of 1999, this included no less than two private universities, 21 Turkish schools (16 in Azerbaijan) and many other educational and cultural centres in both countries.[59]

A natural ally: Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan emerged as Turkey's closest ally amongst the new republics, especially in regard to the Russian challenge and the Armenian factor.[60] Ankara was the first country to recognise the Baku government in November 1991 and supplied help in modernising its infrastructure in education, telecommunications, transport and other major fields.[61] Bilateral relations, especially in the military sphere, also gradually expanded and within

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Foreign Policy', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 52, no. 1, (Winter 1998), p. 46.

[58]Gulnur Aybet, 'Turkey in its Geo-Strategic Environment' in *Rusi and Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1992,* (London: RUSI, 1992), p. 108.

[59]http://www.meb.gov.tr; Aydin, *op.cit,* pp. 384-5.

[60]Shireen T. Hunter, 'Azerbaijan: Search for Identity and New Partners' in *Nations and Policies in the Soviet Successor States',* Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 220; Kamran Inan, 'Rusya'nin Kafkasya Politikasi', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 1, no. 1, (Spring 1994), pp. 26-9.

[61]'Turkey Recognises Independence of Azerbaijan', *Newspot,* 14 November 1991.

the framework of military cooperation agreements, Turkey extended Azerbaijan military training and financial assistance to improve its armed forces. Accordingly, around 900 Azeri military officers were trained in Turkey with the Turkish government covering all these expenses, and helping in establishing Azeri war academies. Turkey also undertook the task of bringing the Azeri armed forces up to NATO standards at a brigade level.[62] Furthermore, the two allies entered into strategic cooperation with the signing of 'Deepened Strategic Cooperation' in which the parties agreed to help each other in the event that either side's sovereignty and territorial integrity was endangered.[63]

On the economic front, in 1992, half of Turkey's trade with the six Muslim former Soviet republics was with Azerbaijan, though in the following years the Central Asian republics increased their share.[64] Azerbaijan was granted credits which amounted to almost half a billion dollars. More than 650 Turkish companies began operating in Azerbaijan and the Turkish investments amounted to nearly US$1.5 billion. Azerbaijan became the gateway to the newly independent Turkic republics, and their huge unexplored energy resources. Fearing Iranian influence, and in an effort to achieve a linguistic unity, Turkey helped Azerbaijan in its transition to the Latin alphabet by supplying books, printing machines and other educational materials.[65] Two thousand Azeri students received scholarships from the Turkish government and Turkey also offered Azerbaijan diplomatic help in gaining membership in several regional and international organisations in the hope that such membership would serve to consolidate Azerbaijan's independence and facilitate its steady integration into international society after decades of Soviet rule.

Although the two neighbours were able to establish these steady relations in the early

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[62]Aydin, *op.cit.*, p. 387.
[63]*Cumhuriyet*, 6 May 1997.
[64]*Subat 1993'de Turkiye Ekonomisi Istatistik ve Yorumlar*, (Ankara: TC Basbakanlik DIE, 1993).
[65]Andrew Finkel, 'Turkey Exploits Cultural Links as it Eyes Central Asia Rich', *The Times*, 28 January

years of Azeri independence and such links were further strengthened with the election of Abulfaz Elchibey, known for his 'anti-Russian' views and his admiration for Turkey, in May 1992, his overthrow by a pro-Russian coup in June 1993 was a major blow to bilateral relations.[66] During Elchibey's presidency, Ankara and Baku concluded several important agreements including oil deals, all at Russia's expense.[67] In addition, Elchibey refused to ratify the CIS founding documents. However, his attempt to stay out of the CIS would cost the Azerbaijanis dearly and also gave a strategic advantage to Armenia, which ratified the accords and generally followed a pro-Russian policy.[68] Still worse, the total exclusion of Russia from the oil deals that were concluded with Turkey and other leading Western countries soon forced Moscow to act swiftly to re-enter the region, and Khaidar Aliyev, a former Soviet Politburo member, came to power in Baku in June 1993.[69] It became clear that despite Ankara's full support for Elchibey, Turkey could not stop a pro-Russian coup and accepted the new regime as a *fait accompli*.[70]

Regime change, however, not only showed the extent of Moscow's influence in the region but was also a significant blow to Turkey's standing and prestige in the eyes of the new republics and ended Turkey's hopes of developing into the dominant regional power.[71] It could also be argued that this clearly undermined the so-called 'Turkish model' for the newly independent Turkic states and Moscow steadily restored its fading

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1992.

[66]For the Popular Front, Elchibey's party, and other main political parties' adherence for Turkism see, Aryeh Wasserman, 'A Year of Rule by the Popular Front of Azerbaijan' in *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies,* Yaacov Ro'i (ed.), (Essex: Frank Cass, 1995), pp. 150-1.

[67]'Turkey and Azerbaijan Sign Pipeline Deal', *Turkish Probe,* 16 March 1993, p. 14.

[68]Martha Brill Olcott, 'Sovereignty and the "Near Abroad"', *Orbis,* vol. 39, no. 3, (Summer 1995), pp. 356-7.

[69]Yasin Arslan, 'Azerbaycan Bilmecesi: Petrol, Darbeler, ve Gercekler', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 1, no. 4, (Winter 1994-95), p. 213.

[70]Jack Snyder, 'International Security in the Black Sea Region: A System Perspective', *Bogazici Journal,* vol. 9, no. 1, (1995), p. 43.

[71]Mohiaddin Mesbahi, 'Orta Asya'nin Uluslararasi Iliskilerinin Dinamikleri: Turkiye, Iran ve Buyuk Gucler' in *Kafkasya ve Orta Asya: Bagimsizliktan Sonra Gecmis ve Gelecek,* (Ankara: TIKA, 1995), p. 107.

power at the expense of Ankara. Indeed, to no one's surprise, under the new administration, it became clear that Turkey would not be the first priority in Azerbaijan's external relations. That is to say Baku joined the CIS in October 1993, suspended oil agreements concluded previously with Turkey, and granted Moscow 10 percent of the rights of exploiting Azerbaijani oil.[72] The Aliyev government also imposed visa restrictions on Turkish nationals and laid off around 1,600 Turkish military experts employed by the previous regime. Although Aliyev later made some efforts to restore bi-lateral relations it became clear that the special Turkish-Azeri relationship entered a new, less beneficial phase.[73]

The only consolation for Turkey was that despite being a CIS member, much to Moscow's disappointment, Aliyev refused to allow the redeployment of Russian troops in Azerbaijani territories.[74] Having been left alone against Armenian advances and Russia's continuing influence, he initially hoped that the oil concessions and CIS membership would stop Armenian attacks on another CIS member, but this simply did not happen.[75] In addition, Russia was not satisfied with a mere 'share' in Azeri oil. This led to a Russian-backed coup attempt against Aliyev in 1994 and 1995 as well as in 1998, the success of which could have further diminished Turkish influence in Baku. It was also suggested that Moscow played the ethnic separatist card supporting various national movements in order to topple Aliyev. For example, a Russian-backed faction of the Lezgin minority group declared war on Baku in 1996.[76]

'Strategic partnership' with Georgia

Like Azerbaijan, Georgia also emerged as a natural ally of Turkey in the post-Soviet

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[72]Yusuf Aslan, 'Elcibey, Aliyev ve Azerbaycan Fenomeni', *Avrasya Etudleri,* no. 1, (Spring 1994), p. 61; 'Russia is Back in the Azeri Oil Deal' *Turkish Probe,* 4 November 1993, p. 14.

[73]Aydin, *op.cit.*, p. 405.

[74]'The Caucasus Come Full Circle and Back to Russia's Lap', *Turkish Probe,* 12 October 1993, p. 16.

[75]Aslan, o*p.cit.*, p. 62.

[76]Ariel Cohen, 'The New Great Game: Pipeline Politics in Eurasia', *Eurasian Studies,* vol. 3, no. 1, (Spring

era. Turkey was the first country to recognise the Tbilisi government in December 1991 and signed an Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation in 1992, which was followed by a Friendship, Cooperation and Solidarity agreement in 1994.[77] However, as discussed earlier, increased bilateral relations coupled with Turkish-Georgian cooperation on oil issues quickly caught Russian attention and as Moscow re-established its control via the manipulation of ethnic instability Turkey's relations were eroded.

Georgia is the most ethnically heterogeneous (with three autonomous regions) of the Transcaucasus republics, and therefore suffered from ethnic unrest following its independence in 1991.[78] Thus, Georgia as a vulnerable new state looked to Turkey for diplomatic and political support, particularly, following the Russian destabilization of ethnic groups. In the same way, Abkhazians, due to cultural and historical ties, turned to Ankara for political and diplomatic support. However, given Turkey's isolation in the region, Ankara was not in a position to pursue a well-calculated Caucasian policy or take any initiative that would have allowed it to play a stabilising role vis-à-vis regional developments. Indeed, the government came under strong criticism on the grounds that it failed to show enough interest in the issue before the conflict turned into a year-long civil war (1992-1993) while both sides were ready to accept a Turkish role in a possible mediation effort. For example, as Ecevit explained 'Ankara could have been more active in bringing the two sides together to settle the issue by a compromise. A high-level Abkhaz delegation came to Turkey to ask for help to find a peaceful solution over the conflict with Georgia, as happened to the Chechen delegation, they could not talk to any official in Ankara.'[79] In fact, Vladislav Ardzinba, the leader of Abkhazia, visited Turkey

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1996), p. 11; Nancy D. Smith, 'Central Asia's New "Great Game"', *The Wall Street Journal,* 15 October 1996.

[77]'Demirel: Turkey Supports Georgian Struggle for Progress', *Newspot,* 19 January 1994.

[78]Cohen, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

[79]Bulent Ecevit, 'Bolge-Merkezli Dis Politika', *Yeni Turkiye,* vol. 1, no. 3, (March-April 1995), p. 68.

several times in 1992 and 1993 for help and recognition.

There is little doubt that Abkhazia's unilateral declaration of independence from Georgia created a great deal of good will among the 500,000 Abkhazis living in Turkey.[80] However, the Abkhaz demand for recognition, and, more importantly the war, which cost over 35,000 lives and forced 270,000 to flee as refugees, placed Turkey in a real dilemma, similar to the one it faced in Chechnya. Many organisations representing Caucasians appealed for Caucasians in Turkey to help the Abkhazia's and Abkhaz volunteers from Turkey joined the war against Georgia. They also organised mass demonstrations in support of Abkhazia and criticised the government's unreceptive stance on the issue.[81] In addition, the existence of large numbers of Turkish citizens of Georgian origin, (Georgian president Eduard Shevardnadze estimated it to be as many as two million) further complicated the issue.[82]

However, in spite of the pressure exerted by its pro-Abkhaz lobby, Turkey supported the territorial integrity and political unity of Georgia and rejected Abkhazia's demand for recognition of its independence while it extended humanitarian aid to both Abkhazia and Georgia.[83] Additionally, it tried to contribute to the diplomatic efforts to find a solution to the ongoing conflict at different multilateral platforms such as the BSEC.[84] Later, Georgia asked Turkey to send observers to monitor the cease-fire with the break-away republic of Abkhazia. Ankara's political support for Georgia when its survival was at stake further bolstered bilateral relations and confirmed the perception of Turkey as a reliable ally.

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[80]John F. R. Wright 'The Geopolitics of Georgia' in *Transcaucasian Borders,* John F. R. Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg and Richard Schofield (eds.), (London: UCL Press, 1996), p. 146.

[81]'Abhazya'da "Cok Uluslu" Savas', *Cumhuriyet*, 29 September 1992; 'Turkey's Circassians: Raising a Nation out of Ruins', *Turkish Probe*, 8 December 1992, pp. 9-10; 'Cerkezler Basbakanliga Yurudu', *Cumhuriyet*, 29 September 1992.

[82]*Milliyet*, 26 June 1996.

[83]'Savas Degil Dostluk Istiyoruz', *Cumhuriyet*, 28 July 1992; 'Turkish Aid to Abkhazian Autonomous Republic', *Newspot*, 24 September 1992; 'Inonu: The Region will become a Basin of Peace, *Newspot*, 22 October 1992.

Through its expanding economic relationship, Turkey soon became Georgia's number-one trading partner of and bilateral relations were further consolidated with the establishment of BSECP of 1992.[85] Trade between the two countries increased from US$18 million in 1992 to US$207 million in 1999 of which Turkish exports accounted for US$114 million. Total Turkish investments reached US$45 million, while Turkish companies gained contracts amounting to nearly US$200 million. Turkey also extended Georgia credits of US$42 million until the end of 1999. Apart from economic and political ties, military relations also improved, as Georgia sought Turkey's support to counterbalance growing Russian influence.[86] In the same way, Turkey viewed Georgia as a counterbalance to Russian/Armenian influence. In this context, the two neighbours signed a military training agreement which was designed to transfer Turkish training expertise to Georgia.[87] Turkey also helped Georgia to establish its national army within the context of NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative, extended military aid worth US$4 million in 1999 and provided technical support and training. Turkey also funded the reconstruction of a former Soviet military airbase in Georgia to be used jointly by the air forces of the two countries, this highlighting what Georgian president Eduard Shevardnadze called a 'strategic partnership'.[88]

However, despite growing ties, the Russian factor remained the key obstacle preventing Turkey from maintaining better relations and more regional influence. For example, fearing Russia's reaction, Tbilisi claimed that the partnership was not against any third country and rejected suggestions that Turkey would station a military base on Georgian territory. Close Turkish-Georgian cooperation with respect to oil pipeline

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[84]'Abhazya'ya KEIB Cozumu', *Cumhuriyet*, 11 October 1992.
[85]Charkviani, *op.cit.*, pp. 89-90.
[86]Semih D. Idiz, 'Georgia Looks to Turkey, and Turkey Responds', *Turkish Probe*, 18 November 1994, pp. 4-5.
[87]*Hurriyet*, 5 April 1996.

projects that would bypass Russia also attracted a strong reaction from Moscow. Only a few days before the Turkish prime minister's visit to discuss the pipeline projects in 1995, there was an attempt to assassinate the Georgian president. A further assassination attempt occurred in 1998 only a few days after Georgia's decision to support the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline. This was later followed by a military uprising. Such developments prompted the Georgian president to accuse external powers (Russia), who opposed the pipelines traversing Georgia, of masterminding the events.[89] Russia was adamant in preventing any efforts, particularly those orchestrated by 'outsiders', to break up its oil transportation monopoly which provided Moscow with invaluable leverage.

Difficult neighbours: the case of Armenia

In contrast to the emergence of Azerbaijan and Georgia as natural allies, Armenia provided a troublesome neighbour for Turkey. Initially, both countries sought pragmatic relations despite the old enmities going back to the years of the First World War. The Yerevan government received Ankara's recognition in December 1991 and Turkey, as a founding member of the BSECP, also invited Armenia to join in 1992.[90] Ankara concluded that in order to have free access to Azerbaijan and Central Asia and to reduce the Russian presence in Transcaucasia, friendship with Armenia was invaluable.[91] It was also needed to reduce the hostile attitude of the strong Armenian lobby in the US and Europe, as well as to defuse the terror organisation ASALA.[92] By way of improving relations, Ankara decided to sell 100,000 tons of grain in 1992, and started supplying electricity to meet 20 per cent of Armenia's energy demand after the Azeri blockade. It

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[88]Aydin, *op.cit.*, pp. 420-1.
[89]*Ibid.*, p. 421; 'Suikastta Rus Golgesi', *Milliyet,* 11 February 1998.
[90]Kamuran Gurun, 'Turco-Armenian Relations', *Eurasian Studies,* vol. 3, no. 1, (Spring 1996), pp. 62-4.
[91]Suha Bolukbasi, 'Ankara's Baku-Centred Transcaucasia Policy: Has it Failed?', *Middle Eastern Journal,* vol. 51, no. 1, (Winter 1997), p. 80.
[92]Sahin Alpay, 'Ermenistan ve Israil', *Cumhuriyet*, 26 February 1992.

also accepted the passage of international aid through its territory.[93] This support and co-operation was perceived negatively by the Turkish public who compared it to the lack of help and aid the government provided to Azerbaijan.[94] It also caused serious disappointment in Baku, and was described by the Azeri defence minister Rahim Gaziyev as 'nothing but a betrayal of the people of Azerbaijan'.[95] This in turn led Turkey to cancel its above agreements with Armenia.[96]

Moreover, the Armenian persistence in relying on a military solution to the Karabakh problem and its refusal to withdraw from Azeri territories resulted in Turkey adopting a staunchly pro-Azeri stance which led to deterioration in Turkish-Armenian relations.[97] While Armenia refused to recognise its borders with Turkey, a decision taken by the Armenian Parliament in 1991, which indirectly referred to some of the Turkish border towns as 'western Armenia', was perceived by Turkey to be Armenia's continuing pursuit of its dream of a 'Greater Armenia'[98], and though Armenian president Ter Petrossian denied that Yerevan had any territorial claims on Turkey[99], a map, distributed by the Armenian embassy in London, showing a large part of Turkey within the borders of 'Greater Armenia', further increased Turkey's suspicions.[100] Ultimately, diplomatic relations were suspended and the border was closed in 1993, as was the transit road across the Turkish border. Turkey rejected the renewal of diplomatic relations with Armenia until it withdrew fully from Azeri territories.[101] In the words of the then Turkish foreign

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[93]'Ankara'dan Erivan'a Bugday', *Cumhuriyet*, 24 September 1992; 'Armenia: Dependent on Energy, Obliged to Peace', *Turkish Probe,* 15 December 1992, p. 4.

[94]'Ankara Karabag'da Cozum Ariyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 4 March 1992.

[95]'Strains in Ties with Azerbaijan' *Turkish Probe,* 12 January 1993, p. 11

[96]'Karabag Katliamina Cifte Gosteri', *Cumhuriyet*, 2 March 1992.

[97]Paul B. Henze, 'Georgia and Armenia: Troubled Independence', *Eurasian Studies,* no: 2, (Summer 1995), p. 31.

[98]'Turkiye'den Ermenistan'a Sert Tepki', *Cumhuriyet*, 20 February 1992; Murat Yetkin, *Ates Hattinda Aktif Politika: Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Ortadogu Ucgeninde Turkiye*, (Istanbul: Alan, 1992), p. 178.

[99]'Erivan'in Turkiye'den Toprak Talebi Yok', *Cumhuriyet*, 18 March 1992.

[100]'Ermenistan'in Hayali: Sevr Haritasi', *Cumhuriyet*, 14 October 1992.

[101]'Cetin: Erivan Isgale Son Versin', *Cumhuriyet*, 6 June 1992.

minister Deniz Baykal: 'If the Armenians withdraw from all occupied territories and cooperate sincerely with the Minsk group for the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, Turkey would regard these developments as a suitable opportunity for the initiation of bilateral co-operation and for the development of relations with Armenia.'[102]

Armenia's isolation in the region in the face of the Turkish-Azeri block, and the steadily developing Turkish-Georgian relationship, drove it to follow a more pro-Russian policy, most notably in the military field. Accordingly, Armenia developed into a stronghold of Russian interests in the region. Thus, for example, Russia placed 12,000 troops on Armenian soil to help guard its borders and the two countries signed a Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance, which was seen by Baku as 'a military alliance within the CIS'. Its provisions permitted Moscow to step up arms transfers to Armenia, which could significantly alter the military balance in the area at the expense of Azerbaijan.[103] Moscow also managed to secure a 25-year military base agreement with Armenia, as well as control of these shared borders. It argued that these arrangements were necessary to protect Armenia from any future Turkish intervention.[104] Vaan Ovanesyan, the head of the defence and national security committee of the Armenian parliament, justified the presence of a Russian military base as a counterbalance to the close military cooperation between Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey.[105] Russian military aid, according to Azeri officials, included the supply of S-300 anti-aircraft missiles and

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[102]*Foreign Policy Statement of Turkish Foreign Minister Deniz Baykal before the Turkish Grand National Assembly,* 3 November 1995; 'An interview with President Ter Petrossian', *Armenian International Magazine,* (January-February 1997), pp. 28-31; Ergun Balci, 'AGIT Zirvesi'nin Ardindan', *Cumhuriyet,* 5 December 1996; Erjan Kurbanov, 'Azerbaijan Security Concerns: Conflict with Armenia Over Nagorno-Karabakh and Potentials for Other Internal Discords', *Eurasian Studies,* no. 4, (Winter 1996-97), p. 11.

[103]*The Economist,* 21 September 1996, p. 52; Gennady Chufrin, 'The Caspian Sea Basin: The Security Dimensions' in *SIPRI Yearbook 1999,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 233.

[104]Paul B. Henze, 'Turkey and Armenia: Past Problems and Future Prospects', *Eurasian Studies,* vol. 3, no. 1, (Spring 1996), pp. 49-50.

[105]*Armenia Daily Digest,* 20 September 2001.

the increased training of Armenian generals.[106] Moreover, it transpired that Russia sent 32 SCUD-B missiles and eight launchers to Armenia, which could not only hit Baku but also some Turkish border towns.[107] Azerbaijan later accused Russia of sending Armenia US$1 billion worth of military hardware from 1994-1996.[108] In response to this close Russian-Armenian co-operation, Vefa Guluzade, special adviser to the president on foreign policy, suggested that NATO should open a military base in Azerbaijan in cooperation with Turkey, an appeal rejected by Ankara and attracted strong Russian and Iranian protests.[109]

Furthermore, Ankara's initial 'Azerbaijan first' policy and its deteriorating domestic economy due to its land-locked location between Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Iran, contributed to the election of the nationalist hard-liner Robert Kocharian in 1998 (he was once Armenia's prime minister and former president of the unrecognised republic of Nagorno-Karabakh) who replaced the moderate Ter Petrossian as the new Armenian president. This was another setback for the OSCE initiative to resolve the Karabakh issue, and damaged any prospect of establishing relations with Turkey.[110] Indeed, Kocharian legalised the Dashnak Party which had a strong anti-Turkish stance and was outlawed during the previous administration. Furthermore, contrary to Petrossian's position and policy, the Kocharian government gave priority to the recognition of the Armenian 'genocide' claims and intensified cooperation with the Armenian diasporas to achieve this goal in several countries and in fact succeeded to do so, for example in France which caused adverse effects on Turkish-French relations.[111] This however further engaged

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[106]*The Daily Telegraph*, 21 July 1998.

[107]*Cumhuriyet*, 15 May 1997.

[108]'Azerbaijan Condemns Russian-Armenian Military Ties', *Reuters*, 20 July 1998; *Milliyet*, 15 September 1997.

[109]'Azerbaycan'a Turk Askeri', *Aksiyon*, 30 January-5 February 1999, p. 48; *Cumhuriyet*, 27 January 1999 and *Milliyet*, 16 February 1999.

[110]See, Hakan Kirimli, 'Kocaryan ve Karabag Sorunu', *Zaman*, 8 Nisan 1998.

[111]Australia also recognised the Armenian claims. 'Australia Recognizes the Armenian Genocide', *http://www.cilicia.com/armo10i_australia.html*. For the Turkish arguments on the issue see, *Armenian Claims and Historical Fact*, (Ankara: SAM, 1998); Turkkaya Ataov, 'Removing Misconceptions about

Turkish foreign policy as the issue was discussed in European parliaments and the US Congress.

Consequently, Turkey could not use the opportunity that emerged with the new era to improve relations with Armenia, while apart from Russia the Yerevan government has attempted to foster closer relations with the countries that Turkey has tense relationships with and effectively joined the 'anti-Turkish grouping' in the region. It forged cordial ties with Iran and Syria, and most notably Greece. The two countries signed a comprehensive defence cooperation agreement to cooperate in the exchange of military intelligence and training, which was presented in the Turkish press as an 'evil front against Turkey'.[112] As already noted, Turkey repeatedly accused Armenia of supporting the PKK by sheltering it and providing it with weapons.[113] Turkey was also unable to foster stronger economic relations with Armenia, which if successful, might have contributed to a thawing in relations. In fact, although there was no direct trade between Turkey and Armenia, other regional countries such as Iran and most notably Georgia sold Turkish foods to Armenia worth several hundred millions, and according to Armenian-Turkish businessmen, this could increase to US$500 if the border was open as highlighting the extent of economic opportunities for Turkey in Armenia which in turn could help to create economic interdependence between the two neighbours in the future.[114]

9.2. The emergence of the Central Asian Turkic Republics: An end to the identity crisis?

The formal break-up of the Soviet Union also opened up new foreign policy opportunities and options for Turkey in Central Asia. Five republics: Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, were now independent after more

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Turkish-Armenian Relations', *Perceptions,* vol. 2, no. 2, (June-August 1997), pp. 42-8.

[112]*Hurriyet*, 19 June 1996.

[113]See, the statement of General Erol Ozkasnak, Secretary General of the General Staff, *Cumhuriyet*, 9 June 1997.

[114]*Armenia This Week*, 22 August 1997 and 2 March 2001.

than a century of Russian/Soviet domination. All the republics, except Tajikistan, are Turkic in language and culture.[115] As in Caucasia, Turkey's relations with the Central Asian republics had been cut off until the end of the Cold War. Moreover, Turkey effectively abandoned its interest in the Turkic republics and various Muslim/Turkic communities within the Soviet Union with the establishment of modern Turkey in 1923. The Kemalist ideology limited Turkey to national goals that were circumscribed by territorial arrangements and denied any claim to Turkic irredentism.[116] As such, as one of the main features of Kemalism, Turkey strictly distanced itself from a revival of pan-Turkist, pan-Turan or pan-Islamic expansionism in other Turkic communities, particularly in Soviet Central Asia and Caucasia.[117] As the result of this isolationist approach, Ankara pursued policy of a non-involvement in the affairs of the ethnic Turkic people. As one observer put it, 'as long as the Soviet Union existed, Turkey acted as if the Turkic republics to the East did not exist.'[118] Even in the initial stages of the post-Soviet era Turkey was slow to approach the republics until its Western allies suggested that Ankara could play a role to promote the Western values by using its special ties.[119]

During his visit to the region in 1992 Turkish premier Demirel proclaimed, probably for the first time in the history of modern Turkey, the importance of the Turkish-speaking community of states outside the borders of Turkey: 'Turks living in an area extending from the Adriatic Sea to the China Sea have awakened and become active'.[120] Importantly, the emergence of the Turkic world coincided with Turkey's marginalisation

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[115]Turkkaya Ataov, 'The Turkic-Speaking Peoples of the Former USSR', *AUSBD,* vol. 47, nos. 1-2, (January-June 1992), pp. 169-79.

[116]Yordanka Bibina, 'Turkey and the New Europe' in *The New Europe and the World,* Lawrence Ziring (ed.), (Michigan: W. Michigan University Press, 1993), p. 234.

[117]*Ataturk'un Soylev ve Demecleri,* (Ankara: Turk Devrim Tarihi Enstitusu), p. 436.

[118]Graham E. Fuller, *Central Asia and Transcaucasia after the Cold War: Conflict Unleashed,* Conference paper on 'The End of the Cold War: Effects and Prospects for Asia and Africa', (SOAS, University of London, 21-22 October 1994).

[119]Saban Calis, *The Role of Identity in the Making of Modern Turkish Foreign Policy,* (PhD Thesis, University of Nottingham, 1996), p. 423.

in the European economic and political system following its declining importance to Western Europe with the removal of the Soviet threat. Thus, having been marginalised in Europe, and facing tough challenges from its immediate Middle Eastern and Aegean neighbours, Turkey felt increasingly isolated both culturally and politically, and insecure in the international arena. Essentially, the emergence of the Turkic states presented Turkey not only with vast economic prospects but also new allies,[121] and enable Turkey to look to the future as the leader of the Turkic world.[122]

The psychology of isolation was one of the main motives behind Turkey's rush to embrace the Turkic republics despite the fact that it had no prior policies or knowledge whatsoever about the region and its peoples. Essentially, this very factor became one of the major reasons for Turkey's failure to take a dominant role in post-Soviet Central Asia. By 1993, the initial euphoria was being replaced by disappointment as Ankara began to realise the realities of this new relationship, and began to acknowledge that relations solely based on historic and ethnic ties would ultimately fail.

The dawn of a new era?

There is no doubt the emergence of the Turkic world with more than 60 million people boosted Turkey's morale, self esteem and optimism and created a certain euphoria about the creation of interlinked Turkish world, and led to hopes that the twenty-first century would be a 'Turkish century', and an 'era of the Turks'.[123] Some analysts described this as a historic changing point in the history of the Turkish people. Cengiz Candar, a leading journalist and foreign policy analyst who is well known for his neo-Ottomanist views,

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[120]*The Middle East,* no. 213, (July 1992), p. 5.

[121]For example, Turkish was accepted as the seventh official language at the CSCE. 'AGIK'in Ardindan Turk Lobisinin Macar Seferi', *Nokta,* 19 July 1992, pp. 68-70.

[122]Ziya Onis, 'Turkey in the Post-Cold War era: In Search of Identity', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 48, no. 1, (Winter 1995), p. 60; Cengiz Candar, 'Degismekte Olan Dunyada Turkiye'nin Bagimsizligini Kazanan Yeni Turk Cumhuriyetlerle Iliskileri' in *Yeni Dunya Duzeni ve Turkiye,* Sabahattin Sen (ed.), (Istanbul: Baglam, 1992), p. 134.

[123]Graham E. Fuller, 'Turkey's New Eastern Orientation' in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans*

argued that 'the existence of a link between Central Asia and Minor Asia (Anatolia) under 21st century conditions has such a potential that it can change the whole international balance of power politics.'[124] Similarly, according to president Ozal, one of the most ardent political champions of this idea, the disintegration of the Soviet Union presented Turkey with the chance to be the leader of the region for the first time in 400 years; speaking at a party conference in 1991 titled '21st century will be Turkey's and Turks' century', he explained

> We have a Turkic world of 140 million stretching from the Balkans to China and, who, more importantly, see Turkey as a role model. If we stay in the right direction and make correct decisions then without any doubt the 21st century will be a Turkish century. As long as we stick together and work hard towards this goal, then whether we become a member of the EC or not does not make much difference. We can feel ourselves as strong as Japan.[125]

Correspondingly, this whole new state of affairs created enthusiasm among the Turkic republics, and served to increase Turkey's influence in the region as the Central Asian leaders initially showed an interest in accepting Turkey as a role model.[126] The end of centralised Soviet power provided them with an opportunity to develop stronger inter-regional relations and to initiate economic and political relations with the outside world, to discard the central planning models and to lessen their dependence on Moscow.[127] In this context, Turkey, a developed country in economic, cultural, and political terms with a relatively successful market economy, a secular, pluralistic-democratic system in an

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to Western China, Graham Fuller (ed.), (Oxford: Westview, 1993), p. 67.

[124]Candar, *op.cit.*, p. 135.

[125]*Cumhurbaskani Turgut Ozal'in '21. Asir Turkiyenin ve Turklerin Asri Olacaktir' Konulu Konusmasi,* (ANAP: Bursa, 22 May 1991). Similar remarks were also placed in Western media., 'all indications point to the fact that a new era dawns in the history of Turkey. The disintegration of the Soviet Union has opened up possibilities for Turkey that even the most fanatical of pan-Turkist could not have possibly imagined.' wrote one German journalist, W. G. Lerch, 'Pan-Turkism or Europe', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 24 April 1992.

[126]See, *Turkiye Modeli ve Turk Kokenli Cumhuriyetlerle Eski Sovyet Halklari,* (Ankara: Yeni Forum, 1992), especially, pp. 9-115; Ziya Onis, 'Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence, *MERIA,* vol. 5, no. 2 (June 2001); Idris Bal, 'The Turkish Model and the Turkic Republics', *Perceptions,* vol. 3, no. 3, (September-November 1998).

[127]See, Martha B. Olcott, 'Central Asia's Post-Empire Politics', *Orbis,* vol. 36, no. 2, (Spring 1992), pp. 253-68.

Islamic society, and close ties with the Western world, appeared as an attractive model. In the words of Azeri president Elchibey 'in the past, there was only one independent Turkic state we looked upon as a model for Azerbaijan.'[128] Moreover, as the Kazakh president also claimed, most of the leaders of the republics viewed Islamic fundamentalist Iran as the main threat to the region and therefore looked to Turkey as a counterweight.[129] While Uzbek leader, Islam Karimov, explained why his nation strongly favoured Turkey over Iran.

> When Uzbekistan, as an independent state, is faced with the dilemma of choosing which course of development to follow from; one that accords with our own interests, I can definitely say that the Turkish path of development is more acceptable for us than the Iranian one, first and foremost because it leads to the development of a secular, civilised society. Of course, we must work out our own path of development, using Turkey as a model.[130]

Unlike Iran, the leaders of Central Asia also saw Turkey as a bridge to the West and an advocate of their economic needs.[131] Furthermore, as a member of Western alliances and blocs, Turkey could act as an political intermediary for Central Asia.[132] In 1992, the Tashkent government even asked Turkey to represent Uzbekistan in international organisations on a temporary basis. Similarly, Turkmenistan did not join the CSCE summit in 1992 but asked Turkey to represent it.

In this framework, the leaders of the Central Asian republics expressed adherence to the 'Turkish model' on many occasions. Askar Akaev of Kyrgyzstan used the metaphor of a morning star that shows the way ahead in regard to Turkey's role for the Turkic

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[128]Yalcin Toker, *Buyuk Uyanis*, (Istanbul: Toker, 1992), p. 61.

[129]*Cumhuriyet*, 23 February 1992; J. F. Brown, *Nationalism, Democracy and Security in the Balkans*, (Dartmouth: RAND, 1992), p. 39.

[130]Quoted in Boris Z. Rumer, 'The Potential for Political and Instability and regional Conflicts' in *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia and Its Borderlands*, Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (eds.), (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 85; 'President Kerimov of Uzbekistan Visits Turkey', *Newspot*, 19 December 1991.

[131]Henri J Barkey and Rajan Menon, 'The Transformation of Central Asia: Implications for Regional and International Security', *Survival*, vol. 34, no. 4, p. 77.

[132]Igor P. Lipovsky, 'Central Asia: In Search of a New Political Identity', *The Middle East Journal*, vol. 50, no. 2, (Spring 1996), p. 221.

republics, 'we want to share Turkey's experience in the economic field and benefit from it'.[133] The Kazak president Nursultan Nazarbayev expressed his intent to follow the Turkish example: 'We want to implement a free-market economy. For this our only model is Turkey.'[134] Saparmurat Niyazov, the Turkmen president, said in his first ever visit to Turkey, 'for us, Turkey is not only a gateway to Europe but also a partner with huge potential, which will guide the Turkmen economy all the way through.'[135] Ankara became the first foreign port of call for Central Asian leaders who wanted aid, political support and access to the West, which they believed Turkey could provide.[136] In turn, Turkey found new opportunities for investment and trade as well as for cultural and political influence as the 'unofficial centre' of the Turkic world.[137]

Turkey also received support from the West as it emerged as a role model for the newly-independent republics and attempted to fill the political vacuum following the end of the Soviet Union. In fact, desperate to prove that it could play a strategic role in the region by acting as a block to radical Islam Turkish officials played up the threat of an Islamic resurgence.[138] This was received by the then US administration with James Baker, the US Secretary of State, declaring that the US did not want these states to come under influence of Iranian fundamentalism.[139] Even Russia accepted, for a time, Turkey's

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[133]'President Akayev of Kyrgzhia in Turkey', *Newspot,* 2 January 1992.

[134]Elizabeth Fuller 'Nagorno-Karabakh: Can Turkey Remain Neutral', *RFE/RL Research Report,* vol. 1, no. 14, (3 April 1992), p. 36.

[135]'Visit of Turkmen President', *Newspot*, 26 December 1991.

[136]Ahmed Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism?,* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1994), p. 210.

[137]Yilmaz Bingol, 'Turkey's Policy Towards Post-Soviet Central Asia: Opportunities and Challenges', *Eurasian Studies,* no. 14, (Summer-Autumn 1998), pp. 13-4.

[138]'Turks Fear Russia Role in Ex-States', *The New York Times,* 19 June 1994; Youssef M. Ibrahim, 'To Counter Iran, Saudis Seek Ties with Ex-Soviet Islamic Republics', *The New York Times,* 22 February 1992; Shireen T. Hunter, 'The West's Role in Muslim Central Asia', *Middle East International,* 24 January 1992, p. 18; Bahri Yilmaz, 'Turkey's New Role in International Politics', *Aussen Politik,* vol. 45, no. 1, (January-March 1994), p. 94; Tschanguiz H. Pahlavan, 'Turkish-Iranian Relations' in *Reluctant Neighbor: Turkey's Role in the Middle East,* Henri J. Barkey (ed.), (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 1996), p. 83; Philip Robins, 'The Middle East and Central Asia' in *The New Central Asia and its Neighbors,* P. Ferdinant (ed.), (London: Pinter, 1994), p. 63.

[139]'A New Era in Turco-American Relations', *Newspot,* 13 February 1992; *SWB,* SU/1309, 20 February

primacy in Central Asia, again, in the hope that it would prevent Iranian fundamentalism from gaining a foothold there.[140] All in all, it seemed that Turkey, with a strong backing from the West, would play a pivotal role politically in the region.[141] However, the extent that Turkey was ready for such an unexpected role was another issue altogether.

Economic, political, diplomatic and cultural ties

Ankara became the first country to recognise the new republics as a whole in December 1991.[142] Initially, Turkey gave priority to strengthening the independence of these new republics. In the words of Halil Akinci, a senior diplomat in charge of the Central Asian republics, 'in the Euro-Asian continent, for the first time in the last three-four hundred years, there is a chance of having a real balance of power. Their independence is one of the guarantees of Turkey's security.'[143] To serve this purpose, Ankara established diplomatic missions immediately after extending formal recognition, and initiated the necessary formalities for membership of the new states into various European, as well as regional, and international organisations.[144] In doing so, Turkey hoped that quick entry of the Turkic republics into the multilateral system would bolster their newly-won independence in the face of Russian efforts to dominate them.[145] Turkey also hoped that their participation in regional and international organisations would end their isolation from the West and facilitate their economic development and political stability.[146] Turkey also played a successful role in integrating the republics into the

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[140]Kemal Karpat, Turkish Foreign Policy: Some Introductory Remarks', *International Journal of Turkish Studies,* vol. 6, nos. 1-2, (Winter 1992-94), p. 8.

[141]Gareth M. Winrow, 'Turkish Policy toward the Central Asia and Transcaucasus' in *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy,* Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 116.

[142]James Nathan, 'Turkey on Edge', *International Relations,* vol. 13, no. 5, (August 1997), p. 23.

[143]Halil Akinci, 'Turkey's Relations With the Central Asian and Caucasian Republics' in *Turkey at the Threshold of the 21st Century: Global Encounters and/vs. Regional Alternatives*, Mustafa Aydin (ed.), (Ankara: International Relations Foundation, 1998).

[144]'Ankara'dan Aktif Diplomasi', *Cumhuriyet,* 1 February 1992.

[145]Karpat, 'Turkish', *op.cit.*, p. 7.

[146]Sabri Sayari, 'Turkey and the Caucasus and Central Asia' in *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia and Its*

Economic Co-operation Organisation (ECO) in 1993, a body established by Turkey, Pakistan and Iran in 1985 with the aim of promoting multi-dimensional regional co-operation.[147]

Ozal later became the first head of state to pay an official visit to the republics. In turn, all the leaders of these republics visited Turkey and within two years Turkey signed more than 200 agreements in economic, cultural, educational, communications and transport, technical assistance and training fields.[148] During a visit to the five Turkic republics in 1992 by Demirel, Ankara commenced export and investment credits to the republics worth more than US$600 million (including US$50 million to Tajikistan), which later increased to over US$800 million.[149] In addition to the creation of a new ministry in charge of relations with the new republics, an economic, cultural, educational and technical organisation named the Turkish International Co-operation Agency (TICA) attached to the foreign ministry was established in 1992 in order to co-ordinate and direct the assistance provided by Turkey.[150] Turkey also helped to train bankers, financial administrators, engineers and diplomats, from the Turkic republics.[151] It was also projected that 10,000 students from the new republics would receive scholarships to study in Turkey. As of 1999, the number had reached 7,425.[152] By the end of 1994, Turkey's spending on humanitarian relief in the Central Asian republics had reached a total of US$78 million.[153] Thus, technical and economic assistance was the key policy tool used to

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Borderlands, Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (eds.), (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 182

[147]'Turkiler de Ekonomik Isbirligi Orgutu'nde', *Cumhuriyet,* 7 February 1992. See for a more detailed information on the ECO see, Onder Ozar, 'Economic Cooperation Organization: A Promising Future', *Perceptions,* vol. 2, no. 1, (March-May 1997), pp. 15-22.

[148]*Turkey and the Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Ankara: Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996).

[149]'Credit for Turkic Republics' *Newspot,* 2 July 1992.

[150]Umut Arik, 'The New Independent States and Turkish Foreign Policy', *International Journal of Turkish Studies,* vol. 6, nos. 1-2, (Winter 1992-94), pp. 34-5.

[151]'Diplomats from Turkic Republics Receive Course Certificates', *Newspot,* 16 July 1992.

[152]Irfan C. Acar, *Dis Politika,* (Ankara: Sevinc, 1993), pp. 72-3; http://www.meb.gov.tr

[153]*Turkey and the Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Ankara: Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996).

ensure a balanced transition to a liberal economy and democratic policies. With this, Turkey hoped that it could limit the effects of rapid change in the region, thus reducing the security risks of regional conflicts and domestic instability.[154]

With regard to political ties, the first Turkic Summit was held in Ankara in 1992. It was attended by the leaders of Turkey, the Turkic republics of Central Asia and Azerbaijan, and resulted in the Ankara declaration that underlined a determination 'to strengthen relations and cooperation among themselves based on the principles of independence, sovereignty, respect for territorial integrity, non-interference in each others' internal affairs and equality'.[155] This was followed by the second summit in 1994, which it was hoped would be repeated every year.

In the cultural sphere, several professional bodies from the republics and Turkey established unions, such as the News Agencies Union of the Turkish-Speaking Countries, and the Union of Turkish World Writers. Joint newspapers and magazine projects were also created.[156] Moreover, with the participation of the culture ministers of the Turkic world (including the TRNC, Tatarstan and Bashkortastan of Russian Federation) a cultural agreement was signed in 1993 with the objective of developing cultural relations, as well as maintaining a common language and alphabet among the Turkish speaking countries and communities.[157] Following this Turkey's minister for culture claimed that 'a Turkish UNESCO is born'[158] and when the Central Asian countries decided to switch their alphabets from Cyrillic, Turkey strongly campaigned for the Latin alphabet suggesting that it would make these republics more accessible to Western ideology and technology

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[154]Claire Spencer, *Turkey between Europe and Asia*, (W. Sussex: Wilton Park Paper, 1993), p. 26.

[155]*Newspot*, 5 November 1992.

[156]B. Zakir Avsar, 'Communication Between the Turkish Republics', *Eurasian Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, (Spring 1996), pp. 101-13.

[157]See, Polad Bulbuloglu, 'Cultural Cooperation in the Turkic World', *Eurasian Studies*, no. 3, (Fall 1996), pp. 45-7.

[158]'A Turkish UNESCO is Born', *Newspot*, 15 July 1993.

and less prone to the fundamentalism of Iran and the Arabic alphabet. It was also argued that this would eventually remove most of the dialectic differences between the Turkic languages and forge closer links at cultural, economic, and commercial levels.[159] A new dictionary comprising the main Turkic languages was published to promote communication among the Turkic-speaking countries and communities in various ex-Soviet republics adopted a thirty-four-letter common alphabet.[160] To help this Turkey supplied materials, such as school books and printing equipment and offered any necessary training, in the hope that it would limit further Russian and Iranian influence. Eventually, with the exception of Tajikistan, all the Turkic republics accepted the Latin alphabet.[161] Further to this, the Turkic republics even dreamed adopting Turkish as the 'lingua franca'.[162]

The Turkish government, as well as non-governmental organisations established numerous educational/cultural centres, schools and universities in several Central Asian states.[163] As of 1999, there were 104 Turkish schools, 11 of which were opened by the Turkish government (18 private and 6 state schools were closed in Uzbekistan in 1999), 10 universities and various other educational establishments.[164] In particular, Turkish ultra-nationalist and religious groups became active in the region and, especially, a faith-based cultural movement under the influence of Fethullah Gulen, a prominent Islamic scholar in Turkey, established nearly 100 schools and universities as well as other

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[159]Peri Pamir, 'Turkey in its Regional Environment in the Post-bipolar Era: Opportunities and Constrains' in *Building Peace in the Middle East,* Elise Boulding (ed.), (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p. 138.

[160]'34 Harfli Yeni Alfabe Sistemi', *Cumhuriyet*, 5 May 1992.

[161]'Common Turkish Alphabet Accepted', *Newspot*, 17 March 1993.

[162]'Ankara's New Goal: Cultural Unification with Turkic Republics', *Turkish Probe,* 8 December 1992, p. 14.

[163]'Orta Asya'ya Yatirim Akiyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1992; 'Orta Asya'da Turk Universitesi', *Cumhuriyet*, 31 October 1992; 'Orta Asya'ya Turk Kolejleri', *Cumhuriyet*, 21 February 1992; Dini Vakiflar Osta Asya'ya Kosuyor', *Cumhuriyet*, 11 May 1992.

[164]Aydin, *op.cit.*, pp. 384-5.

cultural/educational centres.[165] The same group's Istanbul-based daily paper *Zaman* began circulating, not only in Turkic republics, but also in some of the Russian republics, mainly for Turkic nationalities, and became one of the largest circulation papers in these republics. Turkey also largely invested in the telecommunications sector. It opened direct air links to four of the capitals, which previously had been accessible only via Moscow and the Turkish public telecommunications company (PTT) provided public telephone exchanges to the five republics free of charge while Turkish state television started to broadcast the Eurasian TV, *Avrasya,* across Central Asia and the Caucasus.[166]

From euphoria to disappointment

Though the emergence of Turkic republics led to hopes of creating a 'Turkic world', Turkish policy makers soon acknowledged that policies solely based on these feelings could not overcome real challenges, of which Russia was the foremost. The end of Russian control of region had unexpectedly caught the newly-independent republics unprepared and confused. Weak regimes presiding over rapid change in which the political institutions inherited from socialism were incomplete, the economic structures distorted and social and economic expectations out of line with the capacity to satisfy peoples of the region, also caused great domestic instability.[167] This resulted in ethnic conflict, arise of radical nationalism, growing poverty and disillusionment.[168] The same factors also sharply increased the risk of inter-ethnic clashes in Central Asia. Indeed, the clashes between Meskhetian Turks and Uzbeks in Uzbekistan; the violent feuds between Uzbeks and Kyrgyzs in Kyrgyzstan; and the civil war in Tajikistan resulted in thousands

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[165]See, M. Hakan Yavuz, 'Towards an Islamic Liberalism? The Nurcu Movement and Fethullah Gulen', *Middle East Journal,* vol. 53, no. 4, (Autumn 1999), pp. 596-9; Bulent Aras and Omer Caha, 'Fethullah Gulen and His Liberal "Turkish Islam" Movement', *MERIA,* vol. 4, no. 4, (December 2000).

[166]'Turks Fear Russia Role in Ex-States', *The New York Times,* 19 June 1994.

[167]McAuley Alastair, 'The Economies of Central Asia: The Socialist Legacy' in *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies,* Yaacov Ro'i (ed.). (Essex: Frank Cass, 1995), p. 255; Richard E. Friedman and S. Enders Wimbush, 'Central Asia and the West: Key Emerging Issues', *Perceptions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (March-May 1996), pp. 100-1.

[168]Menon and Barkey, *op.cit.*, p. 84; Paul Kubicek, 'Managing Inter-Ethnic Relations in Central Asia:

of casualties and forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee their homes.[169]

This domestic instability made the new republics heavily dependent on Russia in the areas of finance, transport, communications, and security.[170] In particular, Russia was viewed as the guarantor of security in the region in the face of inter-ethnic conflict and the surge of Islamic fundamentalism.[171] Indeed, contrary to conventional wisdom, apart from Azerbaijan, the Central Asian regimes were not fully enthusiastic to assert their independence and did not reject Russian influence straightaway. Indeed, though the CIS when established in December 1992, only included the Slavic republics of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, the Central Asian republics, led by Kazakhstan, insisted upon their inclusion and their membership was accepted later that month.[172] Notably, the earliest leaders (except Akaev) of independent republics had previously been Communist party leaders. Finally, the existence of huge Russian minorities in various parts of Central Asia drove the republics to be more cautious in their relations with Russia[173], as Kyrgyz leader Akaev explained,

> No matter what new ties we establish in the West and East, no matter how great our urge to merge into the eastern or western, or world-wide economic community, our ties with Russia and our friendship and cooperation with the Russian people will always be special. We will give this priority.[174]

Theory and Practice', *Eurasian Studies*, no. 3, (Fall 1996), p. 85.

[169]It is estimated that up to 100,000 people died and more than half a million people became refugees in Tajikistan by early 1993. For a detailed discussion on security issues in the Central Asian republics see, Maxim Shashenkov, *Security Issues of the Ex-Soviet Central Asian Republics*, (London: Brasseys for London Defence Studies, 1992); Muriel Atkin, 'Thwarted Democratisation in Tajikistan' in *Conflict, Cleavage, and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 279.

[170]Irina Zviagelskaia, *The Russian Policy Debate on Central Asia*, (London: RIIA, 1995), p. 24.

[171]Rumer, *op.cit.*, pp. 74-5.

[172]Shirin Akiner, 'Post-Soviet Central Asia: Past is Prologue' in *The New Central Asia and Its Neighbours*, Peter Ferdinand (ed.), (London: Pinter for RIIA, 1994), pp. 14-5. Sule Kut, 'Yeni Turk Cumhuriyetlerinin Dis Politikalari' in *Bagimsizligin Ilk Yillari: Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Kirgizistan, Ozbekistan ve Turkmenistan*, (Ankara: Kultur Bakanligi, 1994), p. 279.

[173]For the Russian minorities in the newly-independent republics see, I. Bremmer and C. Welt, 'The Trouble with Democracy in Kazakhstan', *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 15, no. 2, (June 1996), p. 195; Valery A. Tishkov, 'The Russians in Central Asia and Kazakhstan' in *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*, Yaacov Ro'i (ed.), (Essex: Frank Cass, 1995), p. 290; Roland Dannreuther, 'Russia, Central Asia and Persian Gulf', *Survival*, vol. 35, no. 4, (Winter 1993), p. 102.

[174]Quoted in Gregory Gleason, *The Central Asian States: Discovering Independence*, (Colorado and

In turn, the Russian nationalists began to argue persuasively that control over the members of the CIS was a matter of prestige, a view supported by vice-president Alexander Rutskoi who stated, 'the historical consciousness of Russians does not permit anyone mechanically to bring the borders of Russia in line with the Russian Federation.'[175]

Initially, Turkey assumed (especially in the early years of the post-Soviet era) that, given its own domestic problems, Russia would not be interested in the region. However, both Russian nationalism and suspicion of Ankara's efforts to increase its own role in the region resulted in a growing power struggle between Turkey, Russia and, to a lesser extent, Iran over influence.[176] Iran was from the very onset concerned that any reduction in Soviet influence would be replaced by an increase in Turkish influence and, by extension of American influence. Thus, Tehran preferred Moscow's dominance.[177] This resulted in cooperation between Russia and Iran (as well as Armenia) over the Karabakh issue, the Kurdish issue, on support for opposition to the pan-Turkish movements, and Caspian oil[178] (Iran masterminded the formation of the Caspian Sea Co-operation Council in 1992, which appeared to be Iran's response to the Turkish-sponsored BSECP).[179]

Oxford: Westview Press, 1997), p. 139.

[175]Quoted in William C. Bodie, 'The Threat to America from the Former USSR', *Orbis,* vol. 37, no. 4, (Fall 1993), p. 514; Winrow, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

[176]Hasan Koni, 'Gunumuzde Rus Milliyetciligi ve Sonuclari', *Avrasya Dosyasi,* vol. 1, no. 1, (Spring 1994), pp. 10-4.

[177]Fred Halliday, 'Condemned to React, Unable to Influence: Iran and Transcaucasia' in *Transcaucasian Borders,* John F. R. Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg and Richard Schofield (eds.), (London: UCL Press, 1996), p. 82. For a comprehensive discussion on Iran's foreign policy towards the Central Asian republics see, Freij, *op.cit.*, pp. 71-83; Sayed Kazem Sajjadpour, 'Iran, the Caucasus and Central Asia' in *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia and Its Borderlands,* Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (eds.), (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 197-215, especially pp. 208-12.

[178]For the Turkish-Iran rivalry for influence in Central Asia and Caucasus see, Henri J. Barkey, 'Iran and Turkey: Confrontation across an Ideological Divide' in *Regional Power Rivalries in the New Eurasia: Russia, Turkey and, Iran,* Alvin Z. Rubinstein, and Oles M. Smolansky (eds.), (New York and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), pp. 147-68, especially, pp. 161-66.

[179]Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan are the current members. 'Orta Asya'da Turk-Iran Rekabeti Sertlesiyor', *Cumhuriyet,* 23 February 1992; Bulent Gokay and Richard Langhorne, *Turkey*

On numerous occasions, Russia publicly accused Turkey of attempting to revive pan-Turkism, and tried to block various agreements signed and summits held between Turkey and the Turkic republics. As one senior official from the Russian foreign ministry argued 'it is unthinkable that a summit based on the principle of nationality will not disturb Russia'.[180] Russia also expressed its reservations over the membership of the Central Asian states in the ECO. For example, Russia's first deputy prime minister at the time Alexander Shokhin argued that the Central Asian countries had to decide whether they wanted to be member of the CIS or to join other entities.[181] Russia was also concerned that the strengthening of Turkey's influence, particularly if coupled with pan-Turkish designs, would present a serious danger by stirring the sentiments of more than 15 million Muslims inside the Russian Federation most of whom were indigenous Turkic peoples.[182] Again, 'Turkic World' Friendship, Fraternity and Cooperation congresses, which were organised annually and include participants from the Turkic states and communities including the Russian Federation, took place in Turkey despite the fact that it was agreed that the meeting would be hosted by a different country each year. This underlined the extent that Turkic republics were prepared to enhance close relations with Turkey and ignore Russian suspicions.[183]

Thus, despite considerable rhetoric emanating from Ankara in the early stages of the post-Soviet era, Turkey was prevented from forging strong political ties with Turkic republics due to Russian pressure. As such multilateral co-operation between the Turkic states and Turkey was mainly restricted to the economic, cultural and educational

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and the New States of the Caucasus and Central Asia, (Norwich and London: Wilton Park Paper, 1996), p. 21.

[180]*Turkish Daily News,* 19 October 1994; Meltem Muftuler-Bac, *Turkey's Relations With A Changing Europe,* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 47.

[181]'ECO Summit Arouses Slavic Concerns', *Turkish Probe,* 20 July 1993, p. 9.

[182]Nadir Devlet, 'Ethnicity and Power: Relations Between the Central Asian States', *Perceptions,* vol. 2, no. 1, (March-May 1997), p. 107.

[183]Aydin, *op.cit.*, p. 392.

spheres.[184]

In the early years of independence the Turkic republics also expressed reservations about tying themselves too closely to Turkey and following Ozal's proposal for an immediate economic union of Turkic-language states, they expressed their unwillingness to consider such a dramatic step and suggested that Turkish efforts to create a 'Greater Turkestan' was not only unwelcome but also potentially destabilising.[185] For example, Kazakh leader Nazarbayev argued that 'the restructuring of the region along ethnic and religious lines would impede their integration into the rest of the world.'[186] Similarly, the Uzbek leader Kerimov declared his opposition to the establishment of a supranational body that would coordinate common policies in the 'Turkic world' and made it clear that 'the Turkish Summit will not turn into a political and military entity as it is claimed'.[187] In fact, in 1996, Russia, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan agreed to form their own customs union.[188]

Furthermore, the newly-independent republics were not keen to gain a new 'big brother' (an *agabey*), Turkey, when they had just removed one (a *tarshey brat*), Russia, nor were they keen to respond to the rhetoric of 'pan-Turkism'. It was true that earlier rhetoric about the pan-Turkic world under the 'leadership of Turkey' offended some of the Turkic republics. Indeed, the Azeri prime minister stated that 'we do not want another big brother. What we want is an equal relationship with Turkey.'[189] Thus, they effectively

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[184]Gareth M. Winrow, 'Turkey and the Newly Independent States of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus', *MERIA,* vol. 1, no. 2, (July 1997); Yasemin Celik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy,* (Westport: Praeger, 1999), p. 119.

[185]Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Emma C. Murphy, 'The Non-Arab Middle East States and the Caucasian/Central Asian Republics: Turkey', *International Relations,* vol. 11, no. 6, (December 1993), p. 523.

[186]'Turk Zirvesine Rus Golgesi', *Cumhuriyet,* 1 November 1992; 'Ankara Summit Reveals Strains between Leaders', *Turkish Times,* 15 November 1992.

[187]'Turk Liderlerinin 5. Zirvesi', *Zaman,* 10 June 1998.

[188]Oleg Rybakov, 'CIS: Five Years of Existence', *International Affairs* (Moscow), vol. 42, nos. 5-6, (1996), p. 96.

[189]'Azrbaycan: Baska Agabey Istemiyoruz', *Cumhuriyet,* 20 February 1992.

rejected the notion of Turkey as their natural leader and role model.[190]

What is more, Turkey's demands for more assistance concerning some of its political and strategic issues were often rejected by the Turkic republics, who had different priorities. For example, they refrained from recognizing the TRNC, declined to condemn the Bosnian Serbs and avoided taking a pro-Azeri stance throughout the Azeri-Armenian conflict. Indeed, at the end of the two Turkic summits held in 1992 and 1994 respectively there was no strong-worded declaration on the Armenian occupation on Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan opposed the wording of a resolution which referred to Armenia as the aggressor while on one occasion, Azerbaijan publicly accused its Turkic brother Turkmenistan of supplying natural gas to Armenia.[191]

The Turkish proposal to set up a common military establishment and to train Central Asian military forces was limited in scale and size and was therefore of insufficient value to underpin wider ties. For example, Kazakhstan rejected Turkey's invitation to send Kazak students to study at Turkish military academies, and only Turkmenistan sent a number of officers for military training.[192] This was primarily due to the fact that the Central Asian military was heavily dependent on Russian economic support and lacked experienced personnel (as so few Central Asians became officers in the Soviet Army)[193], and in 1993 in the face of civil war in Tajikistan and continuing instability in Afghanistan, the Turkic countries (except Turkmenistan) decided to meet their security needs under the

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[190]Duygu Bazoglu Sezer, 'Turkish-Russian Relations: From Adversity to "Virtual Rapprochment"' in *'Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari (eds), (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 111.

[191]'Turks Hold Summit under Russia's Watchful Eye', *Turkish Probe,* 21 October 1994, p. 2; 'Getting Together a Turkic Summit', *Turkish Probe,* 24 June 1994, p. 11.

[192]'Kazaklara Askeri Egitim Onerdik', *Cumhuriyet*, 3 March 1992; 'Ayaz: Turk Cumhuriyetlerine Ordu Yardimi', *Cumhuriyet*, 5 May 1992.

[193]Bess A. Brown, 'National Security and Military Issues in Central Asia' in *State Building and Military Power in Russia and the New States of Eurasia,* Bruce Parrott (ed.), (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), pp. 235-6.

CIS[194], and thus entering into Treaty on Collective Security in 1992 in Tashkent. Echoing NATO Treaty, the agreement stated that an attack against member would be considered an attack against them all.[195]

Moreover, one of the main factors limiting the development of economic relations between Turkey and the newly independent republics was that the economies of the Central Asian republics were underdeveloped, and the industry in particularly was grossly inefficient. Central Asia also had little hope of substantial help from the West, as Russia was the main beneficiary of foreign aid.[196] This meant that the weak economies of the republics had to manage without the massive subsidies.[197] Moreover, Central Asian financial systems were tied to the Russian rouble, while they had no control over the monetary policies in Moscow.[198] The republics had very high rural populations, high degrees of non-industrial employment and a high level of agricultural output. It was one of the poorest regions of the former Soviet Union in *per capita* terms and had much higher rates over poverty than average.[199]

In view of this, and given Turkey's lack of financial and commercial resources, huge foreign debt, soaring inflation and budget deficits, it was obvious that Turkey was nowhere near capable of meeting the immense demands and socio-economic needs of the underdeveloped former Soviet republics.[200] In fact, having acknowledged this reality,

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[194]R. Craig Nation, 'The Turkic and Other Muslim Peoples of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Balkans' in *Turkey Between East and West,* Vojtech Mastny and R. Craig Nation (eds.), (Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press, 1996), p. 107.

[195]*Nokta,* 31 May 1992; Olgan Bekar, 'Turk Cumhuriyetlerinde Guvenlik Yapilanmalari', *Strateji,* no. 4, (1995), pp. 31-8.

[196]James Rupert, 'Dateline Tashkent: Post-Soviet Central Asia', *Foreign Policy,* no. 87, (Summer 1992), p. 185.

[197]Hyman, *op.cit.*, p. 294.

[198]Anna Matveeva, 'Democratisation, Legitimacy and Political Change in Central Asia', *International Affairs,* vol. 75, no. 1, (1999), p. 26.

[199]Derek Verrall, 'Economic Development and the Search for National Identity in Central Asia', *Remaking the Middle East,* Paul J. White and William S. Logan (eds.), (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1997), p. 178 and p. 182.

[200]So much so was Turkey's weakness that, for example, whatever the reason might be, it took one year to

president Ozal, for example, marketed Turkey as a channel for Western and Far Eastern investments to explore, produce and distribute the oil, gas and minerals of the region.[201] However, Turkey's own economic instability and the resultant financial crisis of 1994, for example, put off foreign investment and the republics redirected themselves not only to establish economic ties with the region through Moscow but also to seize the emerging Russian market opportunities. In the end, Turkey's desire for a 'privileged partnership' did not develop, and, increasingly the new republics turned towards industrial powers such as the US, the EU, South Korea and their immediate neighbours, most notably Iran.[202] The high level visits made by the Central Asian leaders to Tehran immediately following the first Turkic summit could be seen as a proof that they certainly looked for sources of support and cooperation other than Turkey.[203]

As such, contrary to earlier expectations, trade with the Turkic republics did not generate enormous benefits. For example, though Turkish exports to the Turkic republics increased from a mere US$185 million in 1992 to a record level of US$910 million in 1997, this declined to US$835 million in 1998 and US$574 million in 1999 (half of this total trade was with Azerbaijan). This amounted to 2.2 percent of Turkey's total exports. Similarly despite the four-fold increase in overall trade, from US$273 million in 1992 to US$1,031 million in 1999, this amounted to only 1.5 percent of Turkey's total trade. In fact, Turkey's trade with Russia increased three times more than it did with the Turkic republics over the period. While Turkey's exports to the EU totalled US$7,937 million

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ship 1,000 promised typewriters to Azerbaijan. Mehmet Gonlubol and F. Hakan Bingun, '1990-95 Donemi Turk Dis Politikasi' in *Olaylarla Turk Dis Politikasi (1919-1995)*, Ninth edition, (Ankara: Siyasal, 1996), p. 653; Patricia M. Carley, 'Turkey and Central Asia: Reality Comes Calling' in *Regional Power Rivalries in the New Eurasia: Russia, Turkey and, Iran*, Rubinstein, Alvin Z., and Oles M. Smolansky (eds.), (New York and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), p. 190; G. Fuller, *Central Asia*, op.cit., p. 7.

[201]See, Bulent Aras, 'Turkey's Policy in the Former Soviet South; Assets and Options', *Turkish Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, (Spring 2000), p. 42.

[202]Rouleau, *op.cit.*, p. 112.

[203]Shirin Akiner, '*Central Asia: New Arc of Crisis?*, (London: RUSI, 1993), pp. 53-7; Kut, *op.cit.*, p. 280; Cassandra Cavanaugh', 'Uzbekistan Looks South and East for Role Models', *RFE/RL Research Report*,

and US$14,349 million, respectively (50 and 54 percent of its total exports).[204]

Russia remained the number one trade partner for Central Asian imports and among the leading export market. For example, as of 2000, Russian export accounted for nearly 50 percent of Kazakhstan's, 17 percent of Uzbekistan's, 24 percent of Kyrgyzstan's and 22 percent of Azerbaijan's imports. Turkey's exports to the Turkic republics fell well behind this: it accounted for around 3 percent of imports in Kazakhstan, 4.8 percent in Kyrgyzstan, 11 percent in Azerbaijan and just over 3 percent in Uzbekistan This was also well below countries like Germany and South Korea.[205] Nevertheless, as of 1999, around 2500 Turkish companies were involved in a wide range of investment projects and services and made investments worth over US$8.4 billion in the region. The construction industry have also reached an amount of US$7 billion.[206]

Thus, Ozal's rhetoric which predicted that Turkey would enter the twenty-first century as the strongest country in the region did not materialise.[207] There was no 'Turkish commonwealth' or 'common market of the Turks', and relations mainly focused on economic, cultural and educational ties. Even here there were setbacks as, for example, the Uzbek government recalled almost all of the 2,000 Uzbek students studying in Turkey in 1997 and stopped the project all together reportedly after learning that Islamic groups had made attempts to recruit them.[208] Relations with Uzbekistan rapidly deteriorated as it

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vol. 1, no. 40, (9 October 1992), pp. 11-4.

[204]*Temel Ekonomik Gostergeler Haziran* 2001, (Ankara: T.C. Basbakanlik DPT, 2001); Halil Akinci, *Turkey's Relations with the Central Asian Republics,* (Ankara: Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1995); Erdal Demirhan, 'Turkiye ile Turk Cumhuriyetlerinin Dis Ticaret Iliskileri', *Yeni Turkiye Dergisi,* vol. 3, no. 15, p. 840; *Nisan 1994'de Turkiye Ekonomisi Istatistik ve Yorumlar,* (Ankara: Basbakanlik DIE, 1994).

[205]Source: Statistical Yearbook of Azerbaijan 2002; Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan; Kyrgyz Republic Ministry of External Trade and Industry.

[206]'Orta Asya'daki Turkiye', *Milliyet,* 26 July 1998; *Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs,* 1999; Erol Manisali, 'Turkey's Economic Relations with the Caucasus and Asian Turkic Republics', *Foreign Policy* (Ankara), vol. 21, nos. 1-2, (1997), p. 71; Aydin, *op.cit*, p. 430.

[207]Robins, *op.cit*, p. 275 and p. 280.

[208]Annette Bahr, *Uzbekistan: Politics and Foreign Policy,* (London: RIIA, 1998), p. 61.

competed with Turkey for leadership of the Turkic world. An unsuccessful plot to assassinate the president Islam Karimov in early 1999 led to further tensions with Turkey. Uzbekistan accused Turkey of harbouring the political opponents of its government when Ankara came under fire for moving too slow to extradite one suspect. The Tashkent government called back the Uzbek ambassador in Ankara, closed its airspace to Turkish flights and the Turkish schools.

Similarly, Turkish-Turkmen economic relations also suffered in the late 1990s, although Turkey made its largest investment in Turkmenistan among the Turkic republics. Among other reasons, the Turkmen government claimed that by signing the multi-billion gas deal with Russia, the 'Blue Stream', Turkey acted against Turkmenistan which held the world's third-largest natural gas reserves and was desperate to market its main hard-currency export commodity. Accordingly, Turkish construction firms could not get any contracts in Turkmenistan at all, despite the fact that nearly 50 percent of Turkmenistan's infrastructure was built by Turkish firms after independence.[209]

Nevertheless, Turkey did managed to achieve some success in both economic and cultural relations without irritating other potential actors in the region too much. It can be also argued that Turkey could exert greater influence in the region in the long run given the fact that necessary foundations have been laid for improved relations in cultural, and particularly economic field with increasing trade relations and new energy projects.

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[209]Aydin, *op.cit.*, p. 430.

CONCLUSION

Following the end of the Cold War there was a consensus in many circles, both inside and outside Turkey, that the country would now emerge as an important regional, or perhaps even super, power. Some had hoped that Turkey would evolve into a leading leader force in the area extending from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China, bringing about what some Turkish policy makers to declare that the twenty-first century would be a 'Turkish century'. This aspiration was important for the country at this time as it was becoming increasingly clear that its historic ultimate foreign policy goal of joining the European Community was increasingly remote.

However, contrary to these initial high hopes and expectations, this study has shown that though Turkey achieved some notable post-Cold War foreign and security policy successes, overall it failed to develop into a true regional power. The preceding chapters have attempted to show just how, and why, Turkey failed to seize the new regional opportunities between 1989 and 1999.

Following the end of the Cold War Turkish policy makers were forced to adopt a new policy understanding or a 'grand strategy' in line with the new emerging political realities, and they certainly cannot be faulted for investigating policy options outside the traditionally Western-oriented focus. In part this was part of an attempt to overcome its politico-cultural isolation as neither a fully eastern nor fully European nation, as well as its confused image in international relations.

The new political and economic realities in the Balkans, the Black Sea, the Middle East and particularly in the ex-Soviet territories of the Caucasia and Central Asia with its Turkic/Muslim nationalities who shared common historical, cultural and linguistic bonds, offered a perfect opportunity to Turkey to define its identity and realise its strategic interests at this stage.

Although Turkish policy makers were keen to seize the new foreign policy opportunities and naïve enough as to attempt to fill the post-Cold War vacuum in the region, they soon realised that without sustaining certain economic, political and social dynamics internally, polices based on sentiments borne out of the initial euphoria would not be as successful as expected. In fact, having realised this Turkish policy makers were later to focus on improving bi-lateral economic and cultural relations rather than on playing a leadership role in several areas where they had, in theory at least, considerable influence.

To begin with, it was not realistic for a country, which had traditionally taken a backseat in international relations and had consciously avoided direct involvement in its near-regions throughout the Cold War years, to walk into such a role. Over much of the twentieth century Ankara had generally stayed out of Middle Eastern affairs; kept relations with the Balkan countries to a minimum and had frozen its ties with the ex-Soviet republics of Caucasia and Central Asia, in particular with the Turkic republics.

Thus, by the end of the Cold War Turkey, though aware of the opportunities, was less than equipped for the responsibilities of the new geo-strategic environment it found itself in. In particular, it was taken completely by surprise by the rapid emergence of the new republics and nationalities in its immediate area that were themselves very eager to establish close relationships with Turkey. Consequently, as the newly independent regional states, regimes and nationalities turned to Turkey for political, economic and military assistance and guidance Ankara even as it revelled in its new position as the 'unofficial centre' of the region was unable to live up to this role.

Plagued by ongoing domestic political and socio-economic problems; a highly fragmented political party system which resulted in the period of weak coalition governments with conflicting foreign policy orientations and priorities at a time that clarity and cooperation were vital, Turkey failed to develop coherent policies.

Likewise, the rise of political Islam, which brought the pro-Islamist Refah Party to power for the first time, not only threatened to undermine the basic foundations of the secular regime but also, with its so-called Islamist foreign policy approach, caused havoc regarding Turkey's commitment to its traditional pro-Western foreign policy orientation and the nature of its involvement and ties with the newly-established Turkic republics, not to mention Israel.

Similarly, the mounting terrorism of the separatist PKK organisation placed a significant financial burden on the already troubled economy and no less importantly deeply strained Turkish national unity and territorial integrity. It also increased the enmity between Turkish and Kurdish-origin citizens. All of which meant that there was little domestic agreement over the best way to pursue a new foreign policy. Indeed, often during the period under examination domestic preoccupations appeared to relegate foreign policy issues to secondary importance. This left Turkey, with some notable exceptions such as the increasingly strong US-Turkish and Israeli-Turkish relationship, increasingly sidelined in the push for becoming a regional great power.

Moreover, even leaving these significant domestic obstacles aside, it was also true that the initial optimism over the opportunities available to Turkey was overplayed and many of the foreign policy objectives put forward early on were unrealistic and not easily attainable. In terms of security, although Turkey was relieved that the end of the Cold War had resulted in the decline of the Soviet threat, it now faced a plethora of new regional security challenges, from insurgency to full-scale war in the 'devilish triangle' of the Middle East, the Balkans and the territories of the former Soviet Union. This shift from the relative stability of the Cold War to an unprecedented level of uncertainty made it increasingly difficult for Turkey to forge closer relations with these regions. Rather it focused more and more on how to contain the new threats rather than exploit the new opportunities.

Turkey also faced rising competition from its traditional rivals such as with Russia and to a lesser extent Iran in Central Asia and Caucasia, and Greece in the Balkans both as a way to exert their influence in the rapidly evolving region and as a way of blocking Turkish efforts.

The combination of these internal and external factors significantly limited Turkey's success in exploiting the new foreign policy opportunities in the new regional environment. That is to say, although Turkey successfully established strong alliances with Israel and the US and developed some valuable links with the newly-emerging Turkic republics, it also found itself increasingly isolated in Europe and the Arab Middle East; while its relations with Greece, Cyprus, Russia and Armenia were also troubled.

Most notably, despite the hope in the early stages of the post-Cold War era that Turkey would develop into a 'role model' and evolve into a leading partner in the establishment of an economic, political and cultural 'Turkish commonwealth' or 'common market of the Turks', this dream never came about and indeed froze at the level of limited bilateral ties.

Nevertheless, despite all these disappointments Turkey did manage to lay the foundations for an enhanced relationship with the former Soviet republics of Caucasia, Central Asia and in the Balkans and it is highly probable that it will benefit from this in the longer term, and there is still the possibility that the twenty-first century could see Turkey becoming a key player in what has been called the new Eurasian reality, especially if it achieves its ultimate goal of membership of the enlarged European Union sometime in the next two decades.

But Turkey needs to learn from its failures and successes over the decade between 1989 and 1999, that abstract historic, linguistic geographic and cultural ties alone are not enough to guarantee influence. Rather, domestic unity, economic stability and the capacity to project power and adapt quickly to fast-changing external realities, are the key to future success in attaining ambitious foreign policy goals.

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